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Platonism Unveil'd:

OR, AN

ESSAY

Concerning the

Notions and Opinions

OF

PLATO,

And some Antient and Modern Divines his Followers;

In relation to the *LOGOS*, or WORD in particular, and the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in general.

In Two Parts.

Anno Dom. 1700.

ESSAY

on the

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PLATO,

And those Divine and Moral Doctrines

which

In Two Parts.

ADVERTISEMENT
TO THE
READER.

THE Author of this Piece (as I may say) was stopped in the very middle of his Course; he intended to have added a third Part to the two others which were publish'd, and in it to have examin'd what Divinity the Holy Scriptures attribute to Jesus Christ. He would have confin'd himself to what the four Evangelists acquaint us concerning it, and made it appear to the meanest Capacity, that the Ideas those Sacred Writers have given us, are very wide from such as the Antients put upon 'em, and the Moderns have espoused. But Death prevented the Execution of this Design, and hindered the Publick from reaping the Benefit of it. However if this Essay meet with the Approbation it merits, the World may be oblig'd with a Dissertation *the Author has left upon the* Gospel of St. *John. It may be said of this excellent Man, that he was a Person of very great Penetration as well as Piety, and that he made the Study of the Holy Scriptures his greatest Entertainment. He had nothing in view but a Search after Truth, which when he had found, he embrac'd it with all his Heart; for he was incapable of betraying or disguising it, for any secular Interest whatever. This plain dealing drew upon him many Enemies, but his Patience in a manner overcame all; and the firm hopes he had of a better Life after this did always support him, under all the Tryals thro which the Calumnies and Malice of his Enemies had forc'd him. His Friends have this Comfort however, That those very Persecutors could not refuse him when alive, nor since his Death, the Elogies that his Vertues drew from 'em; and, according to the Custom of this present Age, they took care in his behalf,* to distinguish the Morals from the Doctrine. *The Publick will see by what is here represented to 'em, what Judgment ought to be made of the latter.*

3,030,815

THE TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

THERE are several Passages in the ensuing Discourse, that are very uncommon and extraordinary, which if they should happen to be true, will be much surprizing to the World: And if they are not, the Author has (to appearance) supported them with such Authorities from Antiquity, that besides the Importance of the things themselves, it will deserve the Pains of some Learned Pen to confute this Discourse, to reclaim some who have, and others who may imbibe this Author's Opinions.

ERRATA.

PAG. 4. Col. 2. Lin. 26. for *Love* r. *Power.* P. 13. c. 2. l. last save one, r. *in Isaiah according to the Hebrew.* P. 21. c. 1. l. 22. r. *acquir'd.* P. 36. c. 1. l. 5. dele *of.* P. 39. c. 1. l. 37. r. *dwelt in him.* P. 42. c. 2. l. 29. r. *it was.* P. 45. c. 1. l. 4. r. *World.* P. 49. c. 2. l. 40. r. *contained.* P. 64. c. 2. l. penult. r. *however.* P. 81. c. 1. l. 20. r. *herself.*

Platonism

Platonism Unveil'd, &c.

The First Part.

CHAP. I.

The true Idea of the Logos.

GOD dwelling in an inaccessible Light, where no one can either find or comprehend him, was yet willing to reveal himself to his Creatures, either by the way of a *Manifestation* without, or by the way of *Communication* within. To manifest himself, 1. He environs himself with a supernatural Light, whence he causeth his Voice to be heard, and declares his Will. 'Tis thence that he speaks to Angels: For being invisible by his Nature, even in reference to Angels, it is necessary, that whenever he is pleas'd to declare his Orders to these *Ministring Spirits*, he should give them some marks of his Presence in some certain Place in the Heavens, and make his Will known. This *Manifestation* is so lively and luminous, that the Eyes of Men cannot bear the Splendor of it in this mortal Life. None but the *glorified Spirits* may enjoy this Privilege in common with the Angels, and which St. *Paul* calls the *seeing of God face to face*. It is thus without doubt that Jesus Christ beheld him. Mr. *Le Clerc* hath very well observ'd (on *Exod.* 34. 18.) that *Moses*, who had such frequent Testimonies of the Divine Favour, desir'd this as a singular advantage, that God, who us'd to shew himself in a Cloud, would vouchsafe at last to discover to him his Glory in the same manner as he doth in Heaven. But this is too much for a Mortal; this *Glorious* Presence is an advantage reserv'd for the Angels, as I said before. And without doubt it was in such like Splendor that he presented himself before them when he design'd to create the World, and pronounc'd these words, *Let there be Light*. At least this is the Sentiment of *Basil* of *Seleucia*, in his first Oration upon these words, *In the beginning God created*, &c. God said, *Let there be Light*. "The Voice was "heard, and the World produc'd. But "could not he have perform'd what he "design'd in silence, and without ut-"tering a word? Would not the Work "have obey'd the least token of his Will? "Certainly the Heaven and the Earth, "with the Waters, were already pro-"duced without any preceding Voice.

" But it was not ſo with the Light, " the Voice preceded the Production. " What ſort of a Voice is this, and what " was the cauſe of it? Let us learn to " hearken to Scripture, even when it is " ſilent, and inſtruct our ſelves when it " ſpeaks. Behold here you have it. " The infinite Companies of Angels " that were created, ſaw indeed the " things that were a doing, but could " not perceive their Author, nor diſco- " ver the Cauſe (for the *Divine Eſſence* " is really even above the Contemplation " of Angels.) 'Tis not then without " reaſon that God uſher'd in his Voice, " to make himſelf ſenſible to thoſe Ce- " leſtial *Spirits*, and to ſtir up their " admiration; that ſeeing the Effect fol- " low'd immediately the Word and Com- " mand, they being aſtoniſh'd at the " Prodigy, ſhould turn themſelves whol- " ly to the knowledg of their Creator, " and celebrate his Praiſes, ſaying, Is " there any greater than this? God him- " ſelf teacheth us this Truth in his Diſ- " courſe with his Servant *Job* (*Job* 28. 7. " *apud* LXX.) *When I made the Stars,* " *all the Angels prais'd me with a loud* " *Voice.* For by reaſon of their aſtoniſh- " ment proceeding from the Greatneſs of " that Spectacle, they repeated their Ac- " clamations, and redoubled their Applau- " ſes at every Work that God was a doing.

2. God makes uſe of the Perſon of an Angel, that bears his Name, and ſpeaks by his Authority. 'Tis thus that he appear'd and ſpoke to the Patriarchs, and this is the reaſon why *Philo* calls *Angels Words* ſo often. The Author of *Queſtions and Anſwers to the Orthodox* ſpeaks thus of this *Manifeſtation*: " All the " Angels, ſaith he, which appeared un- " to Men, inſtead and in the Perſon of " *God*, have born the Name of God. " Men likewiſe have been call'd Gods. Both theſe were honour'd with this Title by reaſon of their Commiſſion, which when at an end, they ceaſe to be call'd *Gods*. *God* himſelf ſays concerning the *Angel* that was to conduct the People of *Iſrael*, *Obey him, for I have put my Name in him.* He ſaith as much of Men, whom he inveſted with Magiſtracy: *Ye are Gods, and Sons of the moſt High.* He ſaith to them, *Ye are Gods*, viz. I have given you my Glory with my Name, and ſet you in my Place.

3. Laſtly, God appears after a ſenſible manner in the ſanctified Fleſh of his Son, who is *the Brightneſs of his Glory, his Image and Character*; which is the *great Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſted in the Fleſh, and ſpeaking to us in theſe laſt Times by his own Son.* For Jeſus Chriſt doth now ſucceed the Angels, and ſpeaks to us in the Perſon of *God*. The *Angels* are now become his *Miniſtring Spirits*, and our *Fellow-Servants*. *Gregory the Great* teacheth us this (*Homil.* 8. *in Evangel.*) " The An- " gels, ſaith he, reconcile him with us; " and they who deſpis'd us in our low " Eſtate, look upon us now as their " Companions. Hence it comes that " *Lot* and *Joſhua* have worſhipt *Angels*, " *Gen.* 19. *Deut.* 31. without being re- " prov'd for it. But St. *John* going a- " bout to worſhip an Angel, *Rev.* 22. " the Angel repuls'd him, ſaying, *Take* " *heed thou doeſt it not, I am thy Fellow-* " *Servant.* Hence it is, that before the " Redeemer's coming the Angels ſuffer'd " themſelves to be worſhip'd by Men, " without oppoſing it: but ſince they now " refuſe their Adorations, is it not, that " ſeeing our Nature rais'd above theirs, " they can no longer ſuffer that it ſhould " be ſubmitted to them, and diſdain not " to look upon Man as their Companion, " ever ſince they are oblig'd to worſhip " a Man-God?

All theſe *Apparitions* are call'd the *Word of God*, or, to ſpeak with the *Hebrews*, his *Shechinah*, that is, his *Habitation* and his *Preſence*. But the laſt is the *Word of God* by way of Excellence; 1. Becauſe God reveals thereby his final and principal Deſign, his laſt and perfect Will. 2. Becauſe God appears here, not only in ſome meaſure, but with the Fulneſs of his Graces. 3. Becauſe he mani-

feſts himſelf here not in a tranſitory manner, but inſeparably, intimately and perpetually. Hence it is that the Scripture ſaith only of J. C. *that his Name is the Word of God.*

St. *John* deſcribes to us the firſt of theſe *Manifeſtations*, when he ſaith, *that the Word was in the beginning, that this Word was with God; and this Word by which all things were made, was God himſelf.* In effect *God* himſelf was the *Word*, when he ſpake to create the World out of nothing, becauſe he ſpoke immediately, without the intervention of any *Angel*, or the Miniſtry of any Man. The Doctrine of St. *John* is no other herein, than that of the other Sacred Writers. *God ſaid*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 33. 9. *and all was made.* And to explain what this Speech was, he adds, *God commanded, and all was created.* Where we ſee that his Word is nothing elſe but his *immediate Command.* Is there any other Myſtery in what St. *Peter* teacheth us, *That the Heavens as well as the Earth were made by the Word of God?* 2 *Pet.* 3. 5. Was it not by his Power and Command? What doth St. *Paul* mean, when he aſſures us, *That the World was made by the Word of God?* *Heb.* 11. 3. You cannot find here the Myſtery, for the *myſterious* Word is not in the Original (it is ῥήματι not λόγῳ.) He means therefore that the World was made by the ſingle Command of God, and not by the *Logos* of *Plato.* The ſame Evangeliſt St. *John* a little after deſcribes to us the laſt of theſe *Manifeſtations*, when he adds, that *this Word was made Fleſh*; that is to ſay, that the Fleſh of J. C. was a glorious Cloud, where God made himſelf viſible in theſe laſt Times, and made his Will known: ſo that the *Word*, or the *Preſence* of *God* is now no longer a Body of *Light*, or the Perſon of an *Angel*, but truly a *Man*, a Body, and palpable Fleſh. *Irenæus* calls this Diſpenſation, *the Oeconomy of God in the human Nature*, lib. 1. c. 4. *Bartholomew of Edeſſa* conceived no otherwiſe of this *Incarnation*, when he expreſſeth himſelf thus in his Refutation of *Mahomet*: "The *Word*, ſaith he, *did dwell* "*in the Fleſh* (ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν σαρκὶ) and this Fleſh was made the Temple of God. The *Word*, or the *Power* of *God*, was not made *Fleſh*, according to him; but only becauſe it dwells in the Fleſh, as it were in a Temple. God dwelt in the *Ark* heretofore, and there ſhewed his *Glory* and *Power*, and receiv'd there the Homage from his People; but now he dwells in the Fleſh of J. C. but with a greater Power, and in a more glorious and more viſible manner.

That St. *John* had no other thought, may be proved by ſome of our beſt Interpreters: But in order to underſtand them better before we produce their Teſtimonies, we muſt ſay ſomething about the ſecond *Manifeſtation* of God, *viz.* that by the Miniſtry of the Angels. The Old Teſtament calls theſe Heavenly Meſſengers often, the *Face of God*, his *Glory*, and his *Preſence*, which is the ſame thing with his *Word.* But beſides this, we will ſet down here thoſe remarkable Words of *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, *lib.* 1. c. 7. "The *Word*, ſaith he, is the "*Face of God*, by the which he mani- "feſts and makes himſelf known.——— "The Antients had the Old Teſtament, "and the Law inſtructed them by Fear; "and the *Word* was an *Angel* (λόγος ἄν- "γελος ἦν.) But the new People hath "receiv'd the New Teſtament, and the "*Word* was made (καὶ λόγος γεγένηται) "and the Fear is turn'd into Love, and "*Jeſus* the *Myſtical Angel* is born (καὶ ὁ "μυστικὸς ἀνὴρ ἄγγελος Ἰησοῦς πέπε- "ται. Dr. *Bull* relating theſe Words of *Clement* (in his Defence of the Council of *Nice*) *Verbum Angelus erat*, interprets them thus: *Hoc eſt, per Angelos apparuit*; that is to ſay, he manifeſted himſelf by the Angels (or as *Clement* ſpeaks, by an Angel, or by the Angel, *viz.* by the Angel that bore the Name of God) but he is miſtaken, if he underſtands by the Word, an *Hypoſtaſis* diſtinct from the

Father; and if he means thereby that the design of *Clement* was to insinuate to us, that the *Son of God* did manifest himself by the means of Angels: For who seeth not that these words of *Clement*, *the Word is the Face of God*, do denote, that the Word is the Manifestation of God? And these, *the Word was an Angel*, mean, that the Divine Manifestation was an Angel, or was perform'd by an Angel? Otherwise what can be the meaning of the opposite difference this Father makes between the *Word* which instructed the Antients by Fear, and the *Word* which instructs the New People with Gentleness; that is to say, between the *Word Angel*, and the *Word Man*, between God speaking to the Antients by *Angels*, and speaking to us in these last times *by his own Son?* This would be to no purpose. But if on the contrary, we understand by the Word, a *Divine Manifestation*, either by an *Angel*, or by *his Son*, the words of *Clement* will produce an excellent Sense: He means therefore, of old an *Angel* was the *Word*, that is to say, the *Presence* and the *Oracle* of God; and this Manifestation being *surprizing* and *illustrious*, was an Oeconomy of Fear. But now a Man like unto us is the *Word* of God, that is to say, his *Presence* and his *Oracle*; and this Manifestation being more adapted to our State, becomes a Dispensation of Condescendence and Love. So that if these words of *Clement*, *The Word was an Angel*, do signify that God did manifest himself then by Angels; these words of St. *John*, *the Word was Flesh*, will signify likewise that God doth now manifest himself to Men by the *Flesh*, or, which is all one, by a Man. This is the best Notion we can have of the Word, if we consult the Scriptures, without troubling our selves with *Platonick* Visions. *Clement* had the same Notion, and his Words are remarkable, since they give us a Definition of the Word, and at the same time the true Meaning of it. "The "Word, saith he, is nothing else but "the Face of God, by the which he "makes himself known. Three great Men amongst the Reformers have had the same Notion.

The first is *Bucer*, who translates thus the words of St. *John*, *Et Deus erat Verbum illud*; conformably to the *Syriac* Version, which hath it thus, *Deus erat ipsum verbum*, *God was the very Word*. This Translation doth sufficiently declare the Sentiment of this Divine touching the *Word*: He means that God, speaking then without a Medium, or the Organ of a Man, or the Ministry of an Angel, was himself the Word; he put forth his Power by himself. He explains these words thus: "I would, saith he, tran- "slate the λόγος, the *Oracle*; and if it "were lawful, go off a little from its "first Signification, and render it the "Divine Love and Will (*Vis illa Numinis.*) The reason is, as he adds, "that we ought not to borrow the "Meaning of this Word from the *Pla-* "*tonists*, but of the *Hebrews*, it being "the same with their *Davar*, which the "*Greeks* have translated λόγος. This Assertion is sufficient; we desire no more; let us but understand this Word without the *Platonick* Notions of *Hypostasis*, a Son begotten before all Ages, *&c.* let us hold fast the Notion of the *Hebrews*, who never understood their *Davar*, to be a *Person*, or a *Son*. *Justin* was the first of the *Platonick Fathers*, that made an *Hypostasis* of a *Power* or a *Manifestation*, having alter'd the Ideas of the Scripture by the Prejudices he brought from the School of *Plato*. *Bucer* observes that the *Greeks*, *viz.* the Version of the LXX, render the word *Davar* by that of λόγος. In effect these Interpreters meant nothing else by their λόγος, but only what the *Hebrews* understood by their *Davar*. 1. That Virtue and Power which God thrust forth, that I may so say, out of himself, when he was about to create the World: *Verbo Domini Cœli firmati sunt*, &c. And 2. That holy Breathing which animated the Prophets, *Verbum Domini*

factum est ad Prophetam. Now this twofold Power is found in J. C. both that which created the World, and also that which inspir'd the Prophets. You see, in the very working of his Miracles, this *Sermo*, or this *Jussus Divinus*, which said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light:* His single Word suffic'd, he needed not say any more than, *I will it. Say only the word*, said the Centurion to him, *and my Servant shall be healed.* You see moreover, by the Unction receiv'd from the Father, this *Sermo Propheticus*, by the means whereof he hath declar'd to us the whole Will of God, is also to be seen: For God who spake at other times to the Fathers by the Prophets, hath spoke to us in these last Times by his own Son. In these two regards J. C. shews to the *Jews* that he is the *Son of God*, or the *Messiah*, putting himself into the number of the *Gods*, whom God sanctified, and to whom the Word of God came, *John* 10. *viz.* his Word of Authority and Power, and his Word of Revelation and Prophecy. 'Tis in these two Senses that St. *John* calls him the *Word*; and to put a Metaphysical Signification upon this Word, is a piece of Philosophical Extravagancy.

Let us come now to *Beza*, the second Interpreter I design to produce (on *John* 1. 1.) This Author having related the subtile and Metaphysical Thoughts of the Fathers touching the *Word*; "'Tis not "likely, saith he, that St. *John* would "speak so subtilly on this Subject; we "ought rather have regard to the *He-*"*brew* than to the *Greek* Phraseology: "For altho St *John* writ in *Greek*, yet it "may be said, that in teaching of Divi-"nity, and above all in revealing his "Mysteries, he never departed from the "usual ways of speaking used in the "Holy Writings, and in the Synagogues, "and such as were understood by the "People. Now, according to him, the "*Jews* were wont to call the *Messiah* "the *Word*, as if it were said, *He of* "*whom God had spoken, or whom God had* "*promis'd*; the blessed Seed whereof "God spake so often to the Patriarchs, "and whom we may call the *Word*, or "the *Promise of God*, by way of excel-"lence. Unless it be said, as he goes "on, that this Name was given him, "because he is the only Interpreter of "the Father, by whom he hath mani-"fested himself to the World. But altho this last Interpretation doth not please him so much as the former, yet he repeats continually, that all the rest of those which the *Greek* and *Latin* Divines embrac'd so greedily, do in no way agree with the *Hebrew* Tongue. This is manifest, and hath no need of Proof. If we discard the Ideas of the *Greeks* and *Platonists*, as *Beza* pretends that we ought, farewel then *eternal Emanations* and *Generations*, farewel *internal Word*, and *Word brought forth*, farewel *Trin-Unity* and *Hypostases*, with all that Theological Jargon, which is pretended to be form'd upon the Stile of St. *John*. And if on the contrary, we go up to the Source, and search into the Stile of the *Hebrews* themselves what this Evangelist meant, the *Word* will then be only the so often promis'd and so long expected *Messiah*, of whom God spake to the Patriarchs; or if you please, that Prophet who was to *interpret* to us, the *Word* of the Father, and that *King of Glory*, in whom the whole Power of God was to be manifested.

Mr. *Witsius* may also be one of those Interpreters of the *Logos* of St. *John*, who discards the *Platonick* Notions. He doth not so much as believe that St. *John* borrow'd this Word from either the *Cabala* of the *Jews*, or the *Chaldee* Paraphrasts, but from the Sacred Writers. And since his Explications and Reasonings are the same with those of *Beza* concerning it, we will not count him for a separate Witness.

The third Interpreter I shall allege is *Cœlius Secundus Curio*, who speaks thus in his *Arareus*: "The Sacred History "informs us, that several have [illegible]

" God present, let it be so: but the " same History teacheth us, that these " were *Angels* and *ministring Spirits*, " who holding the Place of God, did " appear unto Men, and spake in his " Name in a visible Form and Person. " And not this only, but the incompre- " hensible God being willing to make " himself known in a more illustrious " manner, did moreover insinuate him- " self into J. C. with all his Majesty; " for we read thus in the Gospel, *The* " *Father that dwells in me, he doth the* " *Works; and he that seeth me, seeth* " *my Father also.* Add to these the " Words of the Apostle, *God was in* " *Christ reconciling the World to himself*; " and these also, *He was pleas'd that* " *all the Fulness of the Godhead should* " *dwell bodily in Jesus Christ.* Doth not all this manifestly prove this Author plainly acknowledges, that as Angels had been the Person or the *Word* of God, J. C. was so likewise? but yet a *Word* more excellent, and a Person more noble, into which God insinuated himself; not *God the Son*, as they tell us, but *God the Father*, according to the Passage the Author quotes, *Pater in me manens facit ipse opera.* The Paraphrase of the same Author on the beginning of the Gospel of St. *John*, is yet more expres: " Before, saith he, that God created " the World, he had in himself the " Cause and the *Reason* of all things (the " Idea and the Design) Altho this *Rea-* " *son* was-with God, we must not there- " fore imagine, that it was any thing " else but God himself. For God was " that *Reason*; but seeing God cannot " be seen with our Eyes, nor compre- " hended by our Mind, he was pleas'd " to put on a Person, under which he " might shew himself as it were in his " natural and living Image. Now see- " ing he is an only and simple Being, " and cannot borrow any form of him- " self, he produc'd himself one with- " out, by the mean of a Voice, and a " Light wholly Divine; which, because " he made use of it to instruct us and " manifest himself, was called his *Word*, " that is to say his *Oracle* and his *Wis-* " *dom*, &c. to the 14*th ver.* where he " proceeds thus: Would you have me " at last to discover this great Mystery? " And tell you under what Form God " came unto Men? This *Word*, this " *Reason*, this Wisdom, this *Oracle* was " made *Flesh*, and this *Flesh* which is " called Man, that he might raise ours " to a Sovereign Immortality. A Me- " tamorphosis to be admir'd in all Ages? " God was the *Word*, the *Word* was the " *Life*, the *Life* was the *Light* of Men; " the *Light* was *Flesh*, the *Flesh* Man, " the Man *God*, who is blessed for ever. " God and Man have join'd themselves " together; for God was in J. C. *recon-* " *ciling the Word to himself.* 'Tis on this " wise that God, the Sovereign God " (*Deus, Deus ille*) O Man! manifes- " ted himself in the *Flesh*, and conver- " sed amongst us. Hence comes it that " a great Prophet gives him the Name " of *Emanuel.*

This Learned Man's Words are remarkable: He saith, that the invisible God being willing to make himself known, was pleas'd to *put on a Person*, that is to say, give himself a Figure, take a sensible Image, under which he produced himself outwardly. That this Image consisting in a *Light* and a *Voice*, which he made use of to shew himself and to instruct us, was for that reason call'd his *Word.* So that the *Word* of S. *John*, and the *Image of the invisible God*, as S. *Paul* has it, are the self-same thing. Thus you have the Word excellently well defin'd, according to the Ideas of *Clement*; neither do I believe, that a neater and more distinct Notion can be formed of it, nor one more agreeing with the Scriptures, which tell us so often of the *Glory of God*, of his *Face*, of his *Dwelling*, of his *Presence*, in an *Angel*, in a *Cloud*, in a *Light*, in a *Fire*, with a *Clap of Thunder*, with a *Voice*, or with a *gentle* and *still Sound*; and what

can

can this be I pray you, but his *Person* and his *Word* ? You need only read *Maimonides*, in his *More Nevochim*, *P.*1. *ch.*25, & 64. where with extraordinary Clearneſs, he explains what the antient Word is, ſaying, that it is the Habitation of the Divine Majeſty and Providence in ſome certain Place, where he would make himſelf known, which he cauſeth to dart forth miraculouſly, under the Repreſentation of a created Light. Would you have the ſame Word under the N. Teſtament ? Conſider the extraordinary Providence that preſided at the Conception of the Meſſiah ; behold an Angel that ſpeaks, and is the *Voice of God* on this occaſion, a Spirit overſhadowing the Holy Virgin, the which reſembles ſo much the light Cloud that cover'd the Tabernacle ; behold the *Habitation* of God in the Meſſiah, dwelling himſelf amongſt us : In a word, ſee the Majeſty of the Father in the Son, whoſe Glory we have beheld. If this will not ſuffice, get up the Mount to the Transfiguration of J. C. you will there ſee an Apparition of two great Prophets, a *Cloud* that covers them, a Light ſpreading itſelf over J. C. his Face, becoming bright like the Sun ; and laſtly a *Voice* coming out of the Cloud, ſaying theſe Words, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleas'd, hear ye him.* Behold here the *Word* wherein God gives all the Marks of his Preſence ; and whence he declares his principal Will, which is, that we ſhould give ear to his *Son*, the only *Oracle* and the ſole *Word*, by which he would ever hereafter diſcover himſelf and ſpeak to us.

Irenæus had no other Idea of the *Word*, *Lib.* 4. *c.* 37. where he ſaith : " That " the *Word* deſigning to ſhew God in " its ſundry Diſpenſations, ſhew'd him " made like to a Man, that by this mean " he preſerv'd to the Father his Inviſi- " bility, leſt Man ſhould come to deſpiſe " him : that if the *Manifeſtation* of " God, which was at the Creation of the " World, did give Life unto Men ; how " much more will the *Manifeſtation* of " the Father by the *Word*, give Life to " all thoſe who ſee God on this wiſe ? " That the Prophets never ſaw the *Face* " *of God* uncover'd, but only certain " Diſpenſations and certain Myſteries, " by which God began to ſhew himſelf ; " that theſe firſt Sketches of the Divine " Manifeſtation, were only the Preludes " of that which was to be made by J. " C. That the Father is inviſible in " Truth, that no Perſon ever ſaw him ; " but that the *Word* manag'd the Diſpen- " ſations of the *Father*, and ſhew'd their " Glory, as it thought fit. *Irenæus* tells us afterwards, " That the *Word* appear- " ed under different Figures, of a *Man*, " a *Wind*, a *Light*, a *Cloud*, a *Fire*, &c. which diſcovers to us, that all *external Manifeſtation*, whether it be by *Angels*, or by the *Fleſh* of J. C. is the *Word* of God ; as all *internal Communication*, whether it be by an Angel, or by an immediate Virtue, is the *Holy Spirit*. And all this is call'd the *Oeconomy* ; or, as *Irenæus* ſaith, they are *myſterious* and extraordinary *Diſpenſations* of the Divinity, which environ his Majeſty to temper its great Splendor, and adapt it to our Curioſity. For to imagine that this is a ſecond Perſon of this Divinity, as *inviſible* and as *infinite* as the firſt, would make all the Reaſonings of the antient Fathers, not only uſeleſs, but alſo abſurd ; for they all unanimouſly declare, not only that the Father never makes himſelf *viſible*, but alſo that he cannot do ſo.

" It is impoſſible, ſaith *Euſebius*, *De-* " *monſtr. Evang. lib.* 5. *cap.* 20. That " the Eyes of Mortals ſhould ever ſee " the Supreme God, to wit, him who " is above all things, and whoſe Eſſence " is unbegotten and immutable. It is " abſurd and againſt all reaſon, ſaith " the ſame Author (*Hiſt. Eccl. lib.* 1. *c.* " 2.) that the unbegotten and immuta- " ble Nature of Almighty God ſhould " take the Form of a Man, and that the " Scripture ſhould forge ſuch like Falſi- " ties. God forbid, ſaith *Novatian* (*de* " *Trinit.*

" *Trinit. cap. 26.)* that we should say " that *God the Father* is an *Angel*, lest he " should be subjected to him, whose " Angel he were. *Et ibid. cap.* 31. If " the Son, saith he, were as incompre- " hensible as the Father, the Objection " of the Hereticks would have some " ground, that then *there are two Gods.* " It is an Impiety, say the *Fathers* of the " Council of *Antioch* (*Epist. adv. Pau-* " *lum Samosat.*) to fancy that that God " who is above all things, can be called " an Angel. Lastly (otherwise I must transcribe all the Fathers) *Justin Martyr* explains himself on this wise in his Dialogue with *Tryphon*: " No body, saith " he, unless he be out of his Wits, will " dare to advance, that the *Father* and " Author of all things did quit the Hea- " vens, to cause himself to be seen in a " small part of the Earth.

I thought to have finished, but that I can by no means pass by that excellent Passage of *Tertullian* against *Praxeas* (*cap.* 16.) " That he would not believe that " the Sovereign God descended into the " Womb of a Woman, tho even the " Scripture it self should say it. This " Father being perswaded by Reason and " Philosophy, that the supreme God is " immense, immutable and invisible, de- " mands how it could come to pass, that " the Almighty God, whose Throne is " the Heaven, and the Earth his Foot- " stool, that this most high God should " walk in the terrestrial Paradise, should " converse with *Abraham*, should call " to *Moses* out of a Bush, *&c.* and " what is yet worse, that he should de- " scend, according to *Praxeas*, into the " Womb of *Mary*; that he should be " impeached before *Pilate*, and be shut " up in the Sepulcher of *Joseph*. He goes on, " Really one would not believe " this concerning the Son, if the Scrip- " ture did not speak it; and perhaps " would not believe it of the *Father*, " tho even the Scripture should say it. How so! would he mistrust the Scripture? No, he means only, that he should mistrust the literal sense, and search there for an Allegory. Consequently then all these Fathers own that the Word by which the Father makes himself visible, is not of a Nature incapable of causing it self to be seen, but something sensible, which represents God to us. It matters not whether they conceive by it an *Hypostasis*, a *Spirit*, an *intelligent Being*, or any other kind of *Representation* in a bright Cloud animated with a Voice. This will always remain true, that they did not understand the *Word* to be a *Spirit* equal to the *Father*, as invisible by its Nature as the Father, but only a certain *Emanation*, where God produceth himself outwardly, and discovers himself in a sensible manner. And tho they might have sometimes spoken of the Word, as of something *invisible*, they meant not by this that it was *invisible* by its Nature, but only that it was not visible to Men out of the time of its *Oeconomy*, retiring it self from their *Presence*, and becoming as it were hid in God. Sometimes they would denote by it, even the *Energy* and the *Power* of God, wherewith his *Manifestation* is always accompanied, but never a second *Hypostasis* in the Divine Nature. For we must observe here sincerely once for all, that the *Word*, if you consider it only in its *Energy*, is no other thing but God himself; but when it is consider'd as it is a Mark of the Divine Presence, then it is something sensible, a *Voice*, a *Light*, or some external Form, such like as was seen in *Angels*, or in the Man J. C. our Lord.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Antients believed that the Word was Corporeal.

WHerefore the Antients attributed a Body to the Word, as *Servetus* very well obſerved (*Apolog. ad Philip. Melanct.*) and ſo *Tertullian* ſpeaks in his Book of the Fleſh of Jeſus Chriſt againſt *Praxeas*, *chap.* 7. where he proves at large, that when God uttered his Word, he gave it a Body, indeed not a Body of Fleſh, but an Hypoſtaſis, that is, Solidity and Subſtance, which is the true Signification of the Word. That's probably what he means, when in *chap.* 6. of the Book *of the Fleſh of Chriſt*, he aſſures that Jeſus Chriſt appeared to *Abraham* with Fleſh, which was not yet born (*non nata adhuc*) that is to ſay, not indeed with ſuch Fleſh as ours, but with a ſolid Body, which had more than appearance. A Body, I ſay, which he in the *8th* Chapter calls the Seed of God; from which as from a Heavenly Seed the Meſſiah was to be born: and this Seed is the Holy Ghoſt, or the Subſtance of the Word, which inſinuated it ſelf into it.

Thence the antient *Docetes*, and all the other Hereticks who held the preexiſtence of the Word, ſuppos'd that the Word did not take true Fleſh of *Mary*, but that he contented himſelf with the Celeſtial and Etherial Body, which he formerly bore in the Apparitions of the Old Teſtament, which had no more than the Appearance and Figure of a Man, which the Scripture calls the Face of God. Monſ. *le Moyne* did not underſtand the thing otherwiſe in his *Varia ſacra*, *p.* 415. "The *Docetes*, ſays "he, compared the Apparitions of Je- "ſus Chriſt to the Apparitions of the "Old Teſtament, which having been "in Etherial Bodies for certain times, "vaniſhed into the Air as ſoon as the "Diſpenſation was finiſh'd, imagining "that the Body of Jeſus Chriſt was not "of any other Nature. And it is in "the ſame ſenſe, that *Cerinthus* and *E-* "*bion* ſuppos'd that Jeſus Chriſt had not "taken true Fleſh, as St. *Jerom* aſſures "in the Preface to his Commentary on "St. *Matthew*. As *Cerinthus* held (*Iren. l.* 1. *c.* 25. *Epiph. Hæreſ.* 28.) That the World had been created by a Power; he alſo maintain'd that Jeſus, who was begotten of the Seed of *Joſeph* and *Mary*, was the Son of the Creator. As to the Chriſt or the Word, he made him the Son of another Power ſuperiour to the Creator, and attributed to him a Celeſtial Body, which he had always kept without mixing it with the Fleſh of Jeſus. For we cannot think he ſuppos'd, that Jeſus the Son of *Mary* had not Fleſh like ours: He meant nothing more than that the Word, or the Chriſt, as he is pleas'd to call him, had not appear'd to Men, but with a Body wholly celeſtial and impaſſible; ſo ſeparating Jeſus from the Chriſt, and making two Natures of them, as St. *Irenæus* informs us. It is with reaſon wonder'd that ſo grave Authors have ſaid, and ſo often repeated, that *Cerinthus*'s Hereſy conſiſted in denying the Divine Nature of Jeſus Chriſt, when he is the firſt who brings the two Natures of Jeſus Chriſt into the Chriſtian Religion; the Divine Nature which he believed to be impaſſible, and which he makes to deſcend from Heaven, and the Humane which he believed to be begotten by *Joſeph* and *Mary*. But there is yet greater reaſon to wonder,

that *Irenæus* has been quoted for it, who says nothing less than what Controvertists make him say. All that that Father says, concerning the Error which St. *John* oppos'd in *Cerinthus*, is, that the World had been created by an inferiour God, or by an Angel; but that there was another superiour God, who had sent his Word or the Holy Ghost in the shape of a Dove, into the Son of *Mary*: That the inferiour Christ, who was called Jesus, was indeed the Son of the Creator; but that the superiour Christ, who descended into the other, was the Son of the most high and unknown God; who after having render'd Jesus capable of working Miracles, and of manifesting the unknown God, withdrew himself into his *Pleroma* when Jesus was to suffer. *Iren. l.* 3. *c.* 11.

This Opinion was not so much *Plato*'s as *Philo* the *Jew*'s, who believed that God had never done any thing but by Angels. Some Hereticks added, that besides the God of the *Jews*, who was one of those Angels, and Creator of the Universe, there was another God who had never manifested himself until he made himself known by the Coming of the Christ. Indeed it seems that this is the only Error, which St. *John* opposes in his Gospel. First he shews, therein following the Psalmist, St. *Paul* and St. *Peter*, that the World was not made by any other than by the Word, or by the Power of God; that this Word was not an Efficacy or Power distinct or separate from the most High God, that is an Angel or self-subsisting Hypostasis; but that it was in God the Creator as his Efficacy, or to say better, that it was the Creator himself. Then he shews that the Word, the Spirit, or the superior Christ who descended into Jesus, who dwelt in him, and who had wrought so many Miracles, was not an Hypostasis, or an emanated Efficacy of another God than he who had created the World, but the proper Efficacy of God the Creator, the same Word which having created the World, was united to Jesus Christ, and manifested in him. The Word by which all things were made, says he, was made Flesh, or manifested in the Flesh. Which shews, that Christ was the Son of the Creator, and not of another God superiour to him; and that the World was not made by an Angel, but by the most high God.

Mons. *le Moyne*, among others, believes, that St. *John* aim'd at opposing this Error. St. *John* assures, says he, *Variæ, sacræ, p.* 407. that the Word was made Flesh, in opposition to the Doctrine of the phantastick Body of Christ. He has no other Design in his first Epistle, where he teaches that Christ is come in the Flesh, and protests that he preaches and insists on no other Word of Life, than that which he had seen, heard and touched; that is, according to him, that Christ came no otherwise than in a real Body, and no way in an etherial one. If we inclin'd to believe that St. *John* aim'd at *Cerinthus* in writing his Gospel, we might add that it is very remarkable, that as often as this Evangelist relates Jesus Christ's saying, that he descended from Heaven, he always makes him speak as if he directly oppos'd that Heretick. For whereas *Cerinthus* said, that the Christ or a Spiritual Nature descended from Heaven, Jesus Christ assures on the contrary that 'tis the Son of Man, that 'tis his own Flesh which descended from thence; Man, as you see, and not a Nature distinct from Man; Flesh, and not a Spirit. 'Tis pity that Heretick did not live in the time of our Lord; one might have the Pleasure of forming a curious System on that Subject, which would not be less well contrived, than that which has been built on the Word of St. *John* with respect to that Heretick. But if we cannot positively assert, that *Jesus Christ*, or his Disciple did attack *Cerinthus*, we may at least affirm, that 'twas against him, or his like, that St. *Irenæus* disputed; "They "hold, says that Father, *l.* 3. *c.* 17,

" 18, 19, & 20. that indeed *Jesus* is " born of *Mary*; but that as to *Christ*, " he descended from above——— so " dividing the Lord, by saying that he is " compoſed of two Subſtances, *&c.* " With their Mouths they confeſs but " one *Christ*, but in reality they have " two—— one *paſſible*, and the other " *deſcending from Heaven*, *inviſible and* " *impaſſible* —— not knowing that the " *Word* which was united to and mix'd " with his Work, and which was made " *Fleſh*, is it ſelf that *Jesus* who ſuf- " fer'd for us.—— But if one ſuffer'd " while the other remain'd *impaſſible*, " it is not one *Christ*, but two.—— Now " every Spirit which divides *Jesus Christ* " (*qui ſolvit Jeſum*, *Vulg.*) is not of " God.— What hinder'd the Apoſtles " from ſaying, that *Christ* deſcended in- " to *Jesus*; or the Saviour who is above " the Oeconomy, into him who is of " the Oeconomy? But the Apoſtles " neither knew nor ſaid any thing like it. " What there was of it, they ſaid, to " wit, that the Spirit deſcended on him " like a Dove. It appears by this Paſſage, and by the whole Work of St. *Irenæus*, that his Opinion was, that the *Word* was made *Fleſh*, not only in communicating it ſelf to the *Fleſh*, which the Hereticks believ'd, but alſo in mixing it ſelf with the *Fleſh*. And therefore in the 21ſt Chapter of the ſame Book, he twice calls him the *Word mix'd and blended* (*commixtum Verbum.*)

The ſame Theology is found in *Novatian*, *de Trinitate*, c. 11, & 19. In one place he maintains that Jeſus is not only a *Man*, but that he is likewiſe *God* according to the Scripture, becauſe the Divinity of the *Word* enter'd into the Compoſition, and mix'd it ſelf with the *Fleſh* (*Divinitate Sermonis in ipſa concretione permixta.*) In another place like unto this, he takes upon himſelf to demonſtrate, that the *Word* having by its *Union* and by its *Mixture* with the *Fleſh*, aſſociated to it ſelf the *Son of Man*, made him what he was not, to wit, the *Son of God*.

Origen ſays as much of it in his third Book againſt *Celſus*: " The Humanity " of *Christ*, ſays he, rais'd it ſelf to ſuch " a degree of Divinity, not only by the " Communication of the *Word*, but alſo " by its *Union*, and by its *Mixture* " therewith (*permixtione*) that it is be- " come a *God*.

Tertullian carrys the matter yet farther in his Book *of the Fleſh of Jeſus Chriſt*, *Ch.* 16. For he ſuppoſes that, " As the " Clay whereof *Adam* was formed, was " converted into true Fleſh, ſo the *Word* " *of God* is converted into the Subſtance " of the ſame Fleſh.

Whence I infer that theſe antient Doctors believ'd the *Word* to be *corporeal*, and capable of being compounded with the *Fleſh*; ſo that as the *Fleſh* has by this mixture been in a manner deify'd, the *incorporated* and *incarnated Word* has likewiſe been render'd paſſible. I ſay *paſſible*, taking the Word according to its literal Signification, and not by the Figure of the communication of Idioms, as we are uſed to ſpeak. For otherwiſe they would have owned two Natures in *Jeſus Chriſt*, the one *paſſible*, and the other *impaſſible*, which is the very Opinion they oppos'd. It is plain, that according to *Irenæus*, the Hereticks ſaid, that the *Chriſt* had been made two Subſtances, or, as he ſpeaks, Subſtance and Subſtance (*altera & altera Subſtantia.*) Now what difference would there be between two Subſtances and two Natures? Let us then ſay that they could not be any otherwiſe refuted, than by ſuppoſing, that the *Word* with the *Fleſh*, made but one *Nature*, or but one *Chriſt*, who from *impaſſible* as he was, made himſelf *paſſible* for our ſake. If there be any other Subſtance diſtinct from the *Chriſt*, which deſcended on him, *Irenæus* teaches us, that 'tis no other than the *Holy Ghoſt*, as the Evangeliſts aſſure us. The *Valentinians* held that *Chriſt* deſcended into *Jeſus*; thence *Irenæus* infers that they made two *Chriſts*. Now if the Orthodox had held that the *Son of God* deſcended into

the *Son of Mary*, 'twas natural thence to draw the ſame conſequence, that then they made two Sons of God. The *Gnoſticks* did not deny that the Son of *Mary* had true Fleſh, and that he really ſuffer'd: They only taught, that Chriſt who deſcended into him, contenting himſelf with his Celeſtial and Etherial Body, did not ſo unite himſelf to the Fleſh of the Son of *Mary*, as to have truly ſuffer'd with him; and therein they divided *Chriſt*. *Irenæus* would no leſs have divided *Chriſt* into two, if he had believed, that the *Word* always remain'd *impaſſible*, while the Man whereunto it was united, did ſuffer. He could not therefore refute them, but by ſuppoſing, that this *Word* ſo united it ſelf to the *Fleſh*, that from being *impaſſible* as it had been before, it became *paſſible*, almoſt as our Soul is ſo join'd to our Body, that it ſuffers with it.

If the *Trinitarians* now hold, that the Divine Nature did not ſuffer, they are in the ſame Opinion with thoſe Hereticks: and if by reaſon of the Union of the two Natures, they can ſay that the *Son of God* or the *Word* ſuffer'd, becauſe one of the two Natures did ſuffer; the Hereticks might alſo have ſaid, that *Chriſt* did not ſuffer, becauſe one of the two Subſtances had not ſuffer'd. And that the rather, becauſe 'twas the Subſtance which had the Perſonality, whereto the Actions and Paſſions do belong: For who doubts but that they were provided with many diſtinctions? What *Irenæus* ſaid in Chap. 21. of the ſame Book, may be objected to the Opinion which I aſcribe to him, *viz.* that "the *Word* ſuſpended his efficacy, that "*Jeſus Chriſt* might die. But that does not ſignify that the *Word* did not ſuffer, but that he would not make uſe of his Power to hinder himſelf from ſuffering, as appears by the following oppoſite Propoſition: "That the Man "was abſorb'd, that *Chriſt* might riſe "again. Which does not exclude the Man from Reſurrection, but means only, that his Infirmities and his Nothingneſs brought no obſtacle thereto, having been ſurmounted by the Power which rais'd him from the Dead. We might ſupport this Hypotheſis with many Paſſages of the Epiſtles of *Ignatius*, but that Diſcuſſion would carry us too far. It is to be remember'd that we give only an Eſſay, and not a compleat Diſſertation on the Word of St. *John*.

CHAP. III.

What the Spirit *of God is, where the* Word *is again conſider'd. The Cauſe of that Error.*

After having ſpoken of the outward *Manifeſtation* of God, I come to the manner whereby he communicates himſelf inwardly. God is a rich Spring which hath always been diffuſing it ſelf; which he hath done either by inſinuating himſelf into all his Works, into which he hath inſpired Soul and Life, ſo that there is not any part of the Univerſe which bears not ſome Strokes and Rays of his Divinity: or by ſhedding his extraordinary Favours into thoſe of his intelligent Creatures, whom he has often choſe to be the Interpreters of his Will. With reſpect to the former, his Communication is call'd the *Spirit*, or the *Breath* of God: The Spirit mov'd upon the Deep, to ſtir the confuſed Maſs of the World, and prepare Matter for the *Word of God*, who framed the ſeveral Parts of it. Therefore

fore the Author of *Pimander* did not conjecture amiſs, when he thinks that what *Moſes* ſaid of the *Spirit of God*, which moved upon the Deep, is to be underſtood of the *Word of God*. It's the ſame *Spirit*, but in a more noble degree, which inſinuated it ſelf as the Breath of God into the Body of *Adam*, to inſpire into him *Knowledg* and *Reaſon*. God's *Hands* made him, the *Spirit* of God gave him Life: Two Powers which always accompany each other in the Work of the Creation. A double Power, which *David* expreſſes, by ſaying in *Pſal.* 33. That by the Word of the Lord the Heavens were made, and their Strength cometh from the Breath of his Mouth. There is a like Expreſſion in the Book of *Judith*, ch. 16. 17. *Thou ſaidſt the Word, and the Heavens were made; thou didſt ſend thy Spirit, and he built them.* All which well expreſſes God's *Command* outwardly, his *Energy* and *Efficacy* inwardly; which *Philo* ſomewhere calls *two Powers* accompanying God; and a Doctor of the Church (*Irenæus*) the Creator's two *Hands*.

To expreſs God's not needing any other than himſelf, his Omnipotent Will, his ſingle Command, his Strength only, and having no occaſion for Inſtruments and Machines, a Learned Biſhop (*Monſ. de* Meaux *Diſc. on Univ. Hiſt.* p. 138.) ſays, "God is repreſented to us as he who "does all, and who does all by his *Word*, "as well becauſe he does all by Reaſon, "as becauſe he does all without Labour, "and that the doing ſo great Works coſts "him but one ſingle Word, that is, it "coſts him no more than the willing it. "The *Jewiſh* Lawgiver, ſays *Longin.* "(*Tract. de Sublim.*) who was not an "ordinary Man, well conceiving the "Greatneſs and Power of God, expreſs'd "it in its full Dignity, at the beginning "of his Laws, by theſe Words: *God* "*ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was* "*Light.*

"All that God does, ſays *Rabbi Maimon* (*More Nevochim*, Par. 1. c. 23.) "is attributed to his *Word*, as in *Pſal.* 33. "*The Heavens were created by the Word* "*of God*, &c. by a Compariſon taken "from the Kings of the Earth, whoſe "*Word* is the only Inſtrument they imploy to execute their Wills. Indeed "God has no need of any Inſtrument "whereby to act, he does all by the ſole "Act of his Will. And, *Ibid. c.* 65. "The *Word* of God, ſays he, ſignifies "no other than his *Will*. But becauſe "Men cannot preſently apprehend how "a thing can be made by the Will only, "thinking it neceſſary, that he who will "make any thing, muſt either do it himſelf, or cauſe it to be done by others; "the Scripture ſays, that God commands "that a thing be, when he will have it "to be, not only by compariſon to our "manner of acting, but alſo becauſe "thoſe Expreſſions do alſo ſignify the "*Will*. So as often as in the Work of "the Creation we meet with the words, "*God ſaid*, it is the ſame as *God willed*: "And theſe, that the Heavens were created by the *Word of God*, is the ſame "thing as by the *Spirit of his Mouth*: "For as his *Mouth* and his *Spirit* are "Metaphorical Expreſſions, ſo his *Speech* "and his *Word* are alſo Metaphorical, "the meaning whereof is, that things "exiſt by his *Will only*. And laſtly in *Cap.* 66. mentioning theſe Words of Pſal. 8. *The Heavens are the Works of thy Hands, or of thy Fingers*; he ſays, that "the *Finger of God* is the ſame thing "with the *Word of God*, and the *Word* "*of God* the ſame thing with the *Will of* "*God*.

Grotius makes almoſt the ſame Obſervation on *John* 1. 1. "Becauſe, ſays he, "*Moſes* wrote, *God ſaid, Let there be* "*Light*, the *Hebrews* have thence call'd "*Devar* (the *Word*) that *Power* or *Divine Emanation*, by which God "brought things out of Nothing, and "worketh all that is uncommon and extraordinary; *Pſal.* 33. 6. & 148. 8. "That which we read of *Iſaiah*, *My* "*Hand hath laid the Foundations of the* *Earth*,

" *Earth*, is in the *Chaldee*, *I have laid* " *the Foundations of the Earth by my* " *Word.* (St. *Peter* uſes the ſame Ex- " preſſion, 2 Ep. 3. 5.) And that Pa- " raphraſt uſes it ſo when treating of " Miracles, Prophecy, or God's extra- " ordinary Aſſiſtance; and particular- " ly when the *Hebrew* ſays, the *Eyes*, " the *Hand*, or the *Face of God*. Whence it appears that in Scripture, ſaying that the *Hands* of God laid the Foundations of the Earth, or that he laid the Foun- dations of it by *his Word*, or by *his Spi- rit*, are equivalent Expreſſions; and con- ſequently that there is no Myſtery in this Term *Word* or *Speech*. Otherwiſe we muſt ſeek it alſo in *Hand*, *Finger*, *Mouth*, *&c.* and make of 'em ſo many Perſons of the *Trinity*. 'Twould be much more proper to ſay with the Biſhop of *Meaux*, as above noted, that thereby is ſignify'd nothing more with reſpect to God, than that the doing great Works coſts him but *one ſingle Word*. In truth, this literal Senſe is much more reaſonable than the ſuppos'd Myſtery.

But I ſaid, in the ſecond place, that there is another more excellent *Communi- cation*, when God fills with his extraor- dinary Gifts, and, if I may ſo ſpeak, o- verflows with his Favours, thoſe of Man- kind whom he appoints to execute his Decrees, as his Prophets and other Meſ- ſengers; and particularly the *Meſſiah*, whom he ſent into the World with all the Characters of an extraordinary *Con- ſecration*. This latter kind of *Communi- cation* is called the *Holy Ghoſt*: And here again we ſee on the one hand, the *Word* and the Commiſſion of God addreſs'd to his Miniſter; and on the other, the *Holy Ghoſt* confirming God's Order to the Mi- niſter, and conferring on him Power to diſcharge all the Duties of his Office. So true it is that the *Word* and the *Spirit* are two diſtinct Powers which ordinarily work [illegible]: I ſay ordinarily, becauſe Caſes [illegible] been where the *Communication* [illegible] *Manifeſtation*; and, on the contrary, others, where God *mani- feſted* himſelf by meer *Apparitions*, which do not imply any Union of the Godhead with the Perſon who was honour'd with them. But here it muſt be obſerv'd, with reſpect to Prophetical *Communica- tion*, that there are two kinds of it, whereof each hath its ſpecifick Character. The firſt, which was when God ſpake by the Prophets, was only for particular Diſpenſations, for certain Times and Mi- niſtrys. The other, which was demon- ſtrated in *Jeſus Chriſt*, to whom the Di- vine Nature was communicated in a much more perfect manner, was inſeparable and perpetual. The firſt is called the *Holy Ghoſt*; the ſecond is not only called the *Holy Ghoſt*, but alſo the *Word*, becauſe *Jeſus Chriſt* was not only a Pro- phet by reaſon of the Gifts received from the *Holy Ghoſt*, but alſo becauſe he was *begotten a Prophet, and born a Prophet*: a diſtinction which raiſes him infinitely above all other Prophets.

This is the Truth which St. *John* de- ſign'd to teach us in writing the Preface, or Prologue to his Evangelical Hiſtory, *viz.* that the ſame *Jeſus* who was born of a Woman, was born the *Chriſt*, or is the *Chriſt*, in right, and by the advan- tage of his Birth. And the reaſon which he gives for it is, that the *Holy Ghoſt*, or the *Word*, for that's the ſame thing, did not only make his Fleſh, but alſo inſinuating himſelf into it, as the antient Doctors ſpeak, did there ſow the Prin- ciples of his Prophetical Operations, in the ſame manner as our bodily Fathers do not only give us Birth, but often tranſmit to us the Seeds of their Incli- nations and Vertues. Now that which had never been ſeen in any other Pro- phet, obliged the Evangeliſt to call *Jeſus Chriſt* the *Word*, to diſtinguiſh him from all other Prophets and Interpreters of God, and to expreſs himſelf in ſo forcible a manner on the Birth of this great Pro- phet, in ſaying that the *Word was made Fleſh*. The old Tranſlation was, *Verbum Domini factum eſt ad Prophetam.* The new has ſomething more emphatical,

Verbum

Verbum Domini factum eſt caro; the Word inſinuated it ſelf into the Fleſh, and prepared it for Prophecy.

Marius Victorinus, to give an Idea of this twofold Divine Diſpenſation, *Manifeſtation* and *Communication*, ſays in his 3*d* Book againſt *Arius*, "That there is "a double *Energy* or Operation of the "*Word*, the one in a *manifeſt* way, *Chriſt* "in Fleſh; the other in a ſecret way, "the *Holy Ghoſt*. Whereupon he calls "the *Father*, a *Voice in ſilence*; the *Son*, "the *Voice*; and the *Holy Ghoſt*, the "*Voice of the Voice*. Which ſhews that the *Holy Ghoſt* is the *Word* of the *Son*, as the *Son* is the *Word* of the *Father*. And it is in this manner that St. *Baſil* ſpeaks, 5 *adverſ. Eunom.* "The Son is the *Word* "of the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt is "the *Word* of the Son; Θεῦ λόγος ὁ "υἱός, ῥῆμα δὲ υἱοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα.

Now we ſee by what means Error was introduc'd. God having reveal'd himſelf to his Creature by way of outward *Manifeſtation*, and by way of inward *Communication*, out of thoſe two Diſpenſations have been made ſo many Divine *Perſons*, diſtinct from God the Father; that is, a ſecond Perſon was made of the *Manifeſtation*, and of the *Communication* was made a third. It is however but one and the ſame God, one and the ſame Divine Perſon, one God *manifeſting* himſelf, one God *communicating* himſelf: In a word, one God, who in *communicating* himſelf, and in *manifeſting* himſelf, varys his Character according to the diverſity of his *Oeconomies*. He changes *Oeconomy*, but, as we ſpeak, without changing *Perſon*; (for I take this Word here according to the Philoſophical Ideas, which are the ſame with thoſe of the common People, and not in the ſenſe of Claſſical Authors, according to which it is certain God changes *Perſon* as often as he changes *Character* and *Diſpenſation*.) And indeed whether God clothe himſelf with a Body of moſt pure Light, an Oeconomy proper for Angels; or ſhew himſelf to the Patriarchs under tranſitory Forms, an *Oeconomy* proper for particular Circumſtances; or make his fix'd abode among us in the Perſon of his Son, an *Oeconomy* proper for the calling of all Nations; it is ſtill the ſame God, one God *manifeſting himſelf*. Again, whether God give his Creature Life and Motion, or kindle in Man the Light of Reaſon, or inſpire Prophets, or ſhed forth an immenſe Influence upon the *Meſſiah*, whom he ſends to us; 'tis yet always the ſame God, one God *communicating himſelf*. 'Tis the ſame who appears every where; the ſame who makes himſelf to be known by Angels thro the brightneſs which encompaſſeth him; the ſame who by his powerful Voice commands all things to come out of nothing, and they obey him; the ſame who ſhews himſelf to the Patriarchs in momentaneous Apparitions of Angels; the ſame who diſcovers himſelf ſomewhat more plainly, when he declares his Counſels to us by the Mouths of his Prophets. In fine, the ſame who dwelling in *Jeſus Chriſt*, ſhews us his Majeſty openly in all its fulneſs, if I may ſo expreſs my ſelf after St. *Paul*: *In Jeſus Chriſt*, ſays that Apoſtle, *dwells the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*; in him greater than the Angels, better authorized than *Moſes*, and more enlighten'd than the Prophets. This is a Myſtery of Love and Condeſcenſion, by which that Supreme and ineffable Being, who dwells in Light inacceſſible, comes and dwells among us, and accommodating himſelf to our weak Apprehenſion, makes himſelf be heard by our Ears, ſeen by our Eyes, and even felt by our Hands.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

God reveals himſelf only by corporeal Repreſentations, ſuted to the Narrowneſs of our Underſtanding.

THIS *Oeconomy* is general: It runs throout the whole Scripture, where God, with the Goodneſs of a Father, explains his Perfections to us by Repreſentations tending to help our Weakneſs. 1. Becauſe we cannot apprehend his *Eternity*, and how he is neceſſarily Self-exiſtent. He ſpeaks of it as a Man, telling us that he was before the Mountains were born, before the Heavens were ſtretched out, and the Stars lighted. Which, by the way, overthrows the Objection taken from God's neceſſary *Exiſtence*, to ſhew, that if we deny the *Trinity* becauſe it is incomprehenſible, we ſhould for the ſame reaſon alſo deny this neceſſary Exiſtence, as being no leſs ſo. I ſay, this Objection does not reach us, ſince the ſame God who in condeſcenſion to us declares his *Eternity* and *Exiſtence* by Ideas, proportion'd to our Capacitys, would not have deliver'd this ſuppoſed *Trinity* to us by Ideas, not only incomprehenſible, but even deſtructive of his Unity, and of the Revelation which he has made of it. 2. Becauſe 'tis impoſſible for us to apprehend his *Immenſity*, he only makes us conceive it by the Idea of a great King, whoſe Throne is the Heavens, and the Earth his Footſtool. And 3. Becauſe we are incapable of framing any true Idea of his Power, and of his other Perfections, he ſpeaks of himſelf, as of a Man having *Eyes*, *Hands*, *Ears*, *Bowels*, &c. to ſignify to us his *Knowledg*, *Power*, *Mercy*, *Wiſdom*, &c.

St. *Auguſtin* ſo well underſtood this Stile of the Scripture, that he places among the falſe Ideas which Men have of the Godhead (*De Trinit. l.* 1. *c.* 1.) that which is uſed to expreſs its Perfections in Terms merely Metaphyſical, and which are not borrowed from any of the things in being. "The Scripture, ſays he, ne-
"ver uſed any other than corporeal Si-
"militudes to expreſs the Nature of
"God to us by; not that the thing is
"ſo, but to ſhew us that it is neceſſary
"to ſpeak ſo. As to things which are
"not, (He means, which are not in the Creature, but are preſumptuouſly ſuppoſed to be in God, or which have no other Being than only in Philoſophical Contemplations, which are called *Ideæ*, or *Entia Rationis*) "the Scripture does
"not from them take any manner of
"ſpeaking, to mark out the Figures of
"them to us, or to make Enigma's
"(that is, *Myſteries*) of them for us.
"Nothing is more dangerous than to
"imagine that in God, which is neither
"in himſelf, nor in any Creature. But the Paraphraſe of Mr. *Du Pin* will be leſs ſuſpected than my Tranſlation (*Hiſt. of Eccl. Auth.* Tom. 3. p. 467. Par. Edit.)
"Thus ſome, ſays he, to form an Idea
"of God which may have nothing in
"common with the Creature, conceive
"him in a Chimerical manner. The
"Holy Scripture is accommodated to
"Mens Weakneſs, in ſometimes attri-
"buting to God ſuch Expreſſions as pro-
"perly ſute only to Bodys, or to imper-
"fect Spirits; and has rarely made uſe
"of ſuch Names which are agreeing to
"God only, becauſe it is in this Life
"very difficult to know the Subſtance
"and Eſſence of the Divine Nature.
To this Paraphraſe I will add a few Words

Words of the same Father *(ib. c. 12.)* " There is not, says he, in the Scriptures any manner of speaking, but " what is us'd among Men, because 'tis " indeed to Men to whom it speaks.

Minutius Felix discourses almost in the same manner, on the Knowledg which we can have of that immense and infinite Nature. For after having said, that " God as he is in himself, is known " by none by himself: He adds, " I " will say what I think: He who be- " lieves he knows God's Greatness dimi- " nishes it; and he who fears diminish- " ing it, does not know it. Could he more plainly tell us, that we cannot have a right Idea of God, but in diminishing his Perfections, and contenting our selves to compare them to the highest Idea of Greatness, which we can frame of them ourselves. Conceiving otherwise of him with *Eternity*, which has neither *past* nor *future*; with *Immensity*, which fills no space; with *Trine-unity*, &c. is conceiving chimerically of him. Let it then be undisputable, That God makes himself known to us only by Characters, which are common to him with his Creatures, or extremely well proportion'd to our Ideas.

We have hitherto said, that 'tis a kind of Figure which represents God to us according to the manner of Men: But perhaps it has not been observed, that this Stile is grounded on the Angel of God's appearing in his Name, and by his Authority, who was called his *Face*, his *Glory*, his *Habitation* and his *Presence*, that is to say, who was his *Word* and his *Oracle*; this Angel, I say, appearing most commonly in the Shape and Figure of a Man. Some of the Antients were bold enough to say, that this *Word* shew'd himself to the Patriarchs in the same shape of Face, with which Jesus Christ should one day appear; and they suppos'd (as *Servetus* has well explain'd it, *lib.* 3. *p.* 108, *& seq.)* That the *Word* was no other than God's *Person*, that is to say, the *Image* whereby God *manifested* himself; and that that *Image* was the very shape of *Jesus Christ* Man, there being, according to them, but one only Divine *Person*, one only *Face*, one only *Representation*, which has always been the same, whether in God's immediately shewing himself in created *Light*, or in *Angels*, or in the *Messiah*, who spake to us in his Name. And 'tis in this sense that we may say, that the *Person* of the Son is *Eternal*.

'Tis easy to apprehend the Mind of the Fathers. They meant that the *Word* was no other than the *Idea* of *Jesus Christ* Man, who being in God's Understanding from all Eternity, was put forth in a visible Form; God, who designed to manifest himself in time by his *Messiah*, having from the beginning, even in the Creation of the Universe, given Preludes of his great Design, in shewing himself to either Angels or Men, only under the visible Form, which his Son was in time to have, which he describ'd in the Symbol of the *Manifestation*, and of his *Presence*, whether by an *Angel*, by *Light*, or by a *Cloud*. So that to speak properly, the *Word* was made *Flesh*, because the same Power which made the World, became the *Power* of *Jesus Christ*; and the same *shape of Face* which appear'd to the Patriarchs, was made the *shape of his Face*, and the Figure of his Flesh. I do not defend this Opinion of the Fathers, I only shew what it was, without obliging my self to maintain it; and this ought likewise to be understood of all their other Hypotheses.

Be that as it will, the Patriarchs being by those kind of *Apparitions* accustom'd to represent God to themselves in humane Shape, God was also pleas'd to speak to them of his *Perfections*, in a manner suted to the *Idea* of his Person, which they had fram'd to themselves. Whereon *Maimonides* observ'd, that the *Chaldean* Paraphrast, to rectify that Idea of the Deity, uses the Term *Word*, to signify in a less familiar manner,

ner, the several *Dispensations* of Providence, which the Scripture calls the *Eyes*, *Hands* and *Affections* of God. It is true, that the Paraphrast intending to soften all those Expressions, which seem to attribute to God corporeal Parts and human Passions unworthy of his Majesty, did in their stead use this Term, *The Word of God*, which seems to bring into our Minds more Spiritual Ideas of the supreme Deity. But he did not consider, that if 'tis unworthy of God to have *Eyes*, *Hands* and *Ears* attributed to him, it will not be less so to give him a *Mouth*, *Breath*, a *Voice* and *Speech*. So that it must be granted, that if by a kind of Figure the Scripture mentions *the Eyes of God*, *the Hands of God*, &c. it is by the same Figure that we say *the Breath of God*, and the *Word of God*. Whereby all the Mystery pretended to be found in this latter Expression must vanish, and we learn not to philosophize so nicely on the *Oeconomies*, wherein God takes various Forms to make himself the better known to us, or on manners of speaking, which he has suted to our weak Conceptions.

CHAP. V.

How the Philosophers, and particularly Plato, *attain'd the Knowledg of the three Principles. A right understanding of the three Principles.*

IT has been said of the most famous Philosophers, *Pythagoras*, *Socrates* and *Plato*, that they heard the *Voice of God*. Which rightly understood, signifies no more than that they had heard that silent Language of the Heavens, which publish the Glory of God, and declare the Works of his Hands. *Clemens Alexandr.* (*Strom. l.* 5. *p.* 547.) who so explains it, says further: "That "those Philosophers, considering the "Structure of the Universe, heard *Moses* himself saying, *God spake, and things were made*, and teaching them "that the Word was the Work of God, "τὸν λόγον τὸ Θεοῦ ἔργον εἶναι. And in truth, after throughly philosophizing on the Principles of the World, they always came thence to conclude, and say, that it was the Production of an Universal *Reason*, and of an *infus'd Spirit* which animated it. And they held these first Causes to be the Properties of one only Maker, I mean the most perfect *Being*. In philosophizing it was natural first to consider, whether the World had always existed, or whether it had been made? 'Tis a Question which *Clem. Rom.* makes to himself (*Recognit. l.* 1. *c.* 27.) Some chose to believe the World's Eternity, but they were but few, and they follow'd the System of *Ocellus Lucanus*. Others, who were wiser and more enlighten'd, apprehended that it must have had a beginning; and these last philosophiz'd according to the Principles of *Timaeus Locrus*.

The Question was farther, to know how and by whom the World had been made? The whole System of the antientest Philosophy run upon this Question. The Philosophers made their Enquiries on it; and after Attention and Study, the most knowing among them heard the *Voice of God*, or the *Voice of Nature*, which taught them that the World was the Workmanship of an infinitely *good*, *all-wise*, and *omnipotent* God. *Plato* was the first who brought this System to Perfection. *Thales*, *Hermotimus* and

and *Anaxagoras* discover'd a Spirit which disposed Matter, and cloth'd it with its several Forms: *Socrates* added, that this Spirit which govern'd the World, was the *Son* of the most high God; and then *Plato* philosophizing yet further, fram'd a kind of *Trinity* (*Ficin. l. 1. c. 11.*) For he conceiv'd a most good God, whom he call'd the *Father* or the *Good*; most wise, whom he call'd the *Reason* or the *Word*; most powerful, whom he call'd the *Spirit* or *Soul* of the World. But then, after all, as they are three Perfections which are inseparable from the Idea of the Creator, he often confounded their Operations. As then, these three Properties, *Goodness*, *Wisdom* and *Power*, make up the whole Idea which we have of God, with respect to the Creation. It's not to be wonder'd that the soundest Philosophy fix'd on these three first Causes, when it was seeking the Origin of the World, by studying and contemplating on the World it self. The *invisible Grandeurs of God*, says St. *Paul*, Rom. 1. 20. *as well his Eternal Power, as the other Attributes of his Godhead, become as it were visible, in being clearly understood by his Works from the Creation of the World.*

'Tis therefore certain, that 'twas by beholding these Works, that the Author of them was found out, and that it was discover'd that they were the effect of Infinite *Goodness*, *Wisdom* and *Power*. And they went no farther, because the System of good Philosophy, with respect to the Creation, proves compleat with these three Principles, as has been already said. And indeed on the least Application, in considering the Existence of this Universe, its well contriv'd Disposal, its Parts so exactly adjusted to each other, its admirable Order, its regular Motion, its Vastness, Form, Laws and Proportions, its Corruptions and Productions, its Duration, Stability and Variety; and in a word, all the Wonders wherewith it is filled; one must necessarily conclude the Meditation, in confessing that immense *Goodness* gave Birth to the Design of it, that profound *Wisdom* fram'd its Model and Figure, that Infinite *Power* executed so great a Project, and that these three Properties together preserve it, and give Motion to all its Springs.

This Philosophy was not unknown to *Calius Rhodiginus*, as he expresses himself clearly enough on it, in his Preface to his 11th Book (*Lection. antiq.*) "*The Heavens* "says he, *relate God's Glory*, &c. It is "certainly so; the Greatness of so exquisite a Work, its Strength and Motion do well shew the astonishing *Power* "of its Maker: Its Oeconomy and "so well contriv'd Disposal publish his "*Wisdom*, and we discover Infinite "Goodness in its Usefulness and Advantages. Wherefore the Divine *Platonists* rever'd this Universe, as the most "August Representation of the most "High God.

Thyssius in his Notes on *Lactantius de Opific. c. 1.* did also penetrate to the prime source of this good Philosophy, consisting in a Trinity of Principles: "God, "says he, created this beautiful World, "and has adorn'd it with a thousand "Wonders, to the end that the Mind "of Man contemplating so amazing a "Work, might admire the *Wisdom*, *Goodness* and *Power* of the great Maker of "it.

So *Minutius Felix* reasons in his *Octavius*: "Observe, says he, all things "which have Being; God makes them "to be by his *Word*, disposes them by "his *Reason*, and brings them to their "Perfection by his *Power*. Good Philosophy went directly to a Trinity, which may be known by the Light of Nature. Some difference will be seen in the manner of expressing, but in the main 'tis always the same Truth.

Plato saw this great Truth. Some others had seen it before him, tho not so distinctly. However they all saw it, not only by way of the *Cabala* and Tradition, as is now pretended, but as a natural Thing, and as a Truth which was owing

to their diligent Search and Enquiry. A modern Author hath with much Reason acknowledged (*Graverol in his Moses vindicatus, p. 89.*) "That all that is "said of the Origin of Philosophy a-"mong the *Egyptians*, *Chaldeans* and "*Grecians*, is a most uncertain Traditi-"on; and his Opinion is, that 'twas the "Fruit of their Study and Experience. What he says of Philosophy in general, is yet in particular more true of this part of it, which treats of the three Principles whereof we have been speaking. It is by their long Searches into the Origin of the World, and not by Tradition (at least by a very uncertain and confus'd Tradition) that they attain'd to the Knowledg of these three Principles, *Goodness*, *Wisdom* and *Power*.

CHAP. VI.

A Digression concerning Socrates's *Genius.*

THose are the invisible Excellencies which are discover'd in the visible Works of the Creation, and a natural Philosophy, which does not depend on Tradition, but on Contemplation and Study. *Socrates* did not take any other Method to find the Truth, as *Apuleus* relates after *Plato* (*de Deo Socratis*) "*So-*"*crates*, says he, being inspir'd by his "Genius, has assur'd us that he heard a "*Celestial Voice.* These Words rightly understood, prove what I have been asserting: For I don't think this *Celestial Voice* can signify either the *Chaldeans Cabal*, or any particular Revelation. He must be little skill'd in the Allegorical Philosophy of those Times, who does not see that by these Words, *Genius*, *Demon*, *Celestial Voice*, was meant nothing more, than that *Socrates* by the force of his own *Genius* and *Reason*, which he always consulted, had apprehended this *Divine Language* of Nature, which declares a Creator to us. *Reason* duly consulted, and *Nature* well understood, are the Oracle of wise Men: "*Reason*, says *Heraclides Ponticus*, explaining *Homer*'s Allegories. "*Reason* is a *Demon*, "which God hath planted in the superi-"our part of the Body, to inspire us "with truly Celestial Inclinations.

The Author who gives us the Life of *Socrates* in *French*, having mention'd the several Opinions of those who literally believ'd that *Socrates* had a familiar *Demon*, adds, "That some others suppos'd "that this *Genius* was only his natural "Judgment or his Soul: that 'twas that "which he called his Demon, accord-"ing to the manner of speaking us'd by "Philosophers, who sometimes gave "that Name to that Divine Part of Man, "which guides and governs him. This "Doubt, adds he, is also propos'd by "*Plutarch*, in the first Question con-"cerning *Plato*, where speaking of *So-*"*crates*, he says, *Did he not give the* "*Name of God to his own Nature?* "Thereon quoting the Opinions of *Me-*"*nander*, *Heraclitus* and *Xenocrates*, who "say, that every ones *Soul* is his *God* or "a *Demon*.——A Friend of *Socrates* "having gone down to *Trophonius* his "Cave, on purpose to know from the "Oracle what the Demon of *Socrates* "was, brought no other Answer thence, "than that the superiour Part of our "Soul, which is not overpower'd by "our Passions, is by the vulgar call'd "*Understanding*, but that those who "speak better call it a *Demon*. Another "Oracle answer'd *Socrates*'s Father, "That

" That he ſhould let his Son do whate-
" ver came into his Mind, without
" thwarting his natural Inclination, be-
" cauſe he had in him a Guide and Di-
" rector more worth than ten thouſand
" Maſters.——As to the *Voice* which
" he heard, 'tis a manner of ſpeaking,
" like the Phraſe we daily uſe, *my Mind*
" *tells me*: becauſe there is nothing
" more natural, than aſcribing Speech
" and a Voice to that ſecret Motion of
" the Soul, from which, as from a faith-
" ful Voice, we receive ſo many Coun-
" ſels and Informations.——Where-
" to add his Prudence, ſolid Judgment
" and great Experience in the things of
" the World. For why might not ſuch
" a piercing Mind as his, exercis'd by
" long Study in Philoſophy, and by at-
" tentive Obſervation of the Manners
" and Affairs of Men, which might
" have requir'd an extraordinary Facility
" of Reaſoning on all ſorts of Circum-
" ſtances: Why, I ſay, might he not
" have ſeen clearer than others, and have
" diſcover'd things which are moſt com-
" monly hid from vulgar Underſtand-
" ings? By this Diſcourſe of Monſieur *Charpentier*, it appears that Philoſophers have a Myſterious and Theological Language, diſtinct from that of the Vulgar; and that we muſt not ſuffer our ſelves to be ſo deceiv'd by their pompous Words as to make a venerable *Myſtery* of a mere *Allegory*. It is what Father *Simon* did not omit obſerving (*Crit. Hiſt. of the New Teſtament*, *p.* 95.) " The *Platoniſts*,
" ſays he, who have often expreſs'd
" themſelves more like Divines than Phi-
" loſophers, meant nothing more by the
" *Demon* or God of *Socrates*, than *Rea-*
" *ſon*. The Author of the Critical, Mo-
ral, and Hiſtorical Reflections, is alſo of this Opinion, *p.* 66. " *Socrates*, ſays he,
" was ſo wiſe, that foreſeeing all things,
" it was believed that he had a familiar
" *Demon*: but that *Demon* was nothing
" elſe but his Attention on the Preſent,
" Reflection on the Paſt, and Penetration
" into the Future, grounded on Con-
" jectures, which the Study of the World
" furniſh'd him with. The ſame Au-
thor quotes, *pag.* 215. this good Saying of *Diogenes*: " *Thoſe who have Underſtand-*
" *ing need not trouble the Oracles.* And indeed thoſe Men of Parts, like *Socrates*, have a living *Oracle* and familiar *Demon*. Thus the Antients lov'd to theologize the commoneſt things, and to find *Gods* every where.

CHAP. VII.

A Continuation of the Doctrine of the Three Principles.

AFter this Digreſſion concerning the *Demon* of *Socrates*, we'll return to *Plato*. That Philoſopher had attained to a perfect Knowledg of theſe three Principles, *Goodneſs*, *Wiſdom* and *Power*; and underſtood thereby, 1. That the World was not Eternal and *Unbegotten*; but that the ſupreme Father, thereto inclined by a Diſpoſition of *Goodneſs*, had begotten it by his *Wiſdom*, and filled it with his *Power*: three Principles which he call'd the *Good*, the *Reaſon*, and the *Soul* of the World. 2 That the Production of the World was not an effect of Chance, or of any blind Principle, but of a moſt *good* and moſt *wiſe* Cauſe, of an *intelligent* and *rational* Power.

The Author of the *Recognitions*, *l.* 8. *c.* 19. informs us, that this was *Plato*'s meaning. For arguing againſt thoſe who attributed the World's Origin to the fortuitous jumbling together of Atoms,

Atoms, he applies himself to prove that 'tis the effect of profound Wisdom; and not forgetting one rational Property, comes thence to say, that 'tis the Work of Reason, which *Reason*, says he, I call the *Word* and *God*. It is apparent that *Plato* had no other thought than that of this Author. Nevertheless, fearing *Socrates's* Fate, he veil'd these great Truths under a Cloud of Fictions and Enigma's, which prov'd a Snare to his Disciples: and, not having Courage enough to oppose common Error, made of these *three Properties* of the Creator, so many *Gods*, or Divine *Persons*; complying with the Theology of that Age, wherein Powers, Passions, Properties, *&c.* Fortune, Fate, Justice, Love, Vertue, Honour, Safety, Concord, *&c.* were not otherwise conceiv'd than under the Idea of so many Deitys; so much was the Plurality of Gods the Philosophy *a la mode*, even among the Wisest.

"It is difficult, said *Plato* (*apud Clem. Alex. Strom. l.* 5.) to find the Father "of this Universe; and when you have "found him, 'tis not permitted to speak "of him to the People: Meaning, that it was dangerous to declare a Truth which gave offence to the received Opinion of the Plurality of Gods, and which, consequently, could not be declared otherwise than under the Veil of *Allegory*, and under the Fiction of many *Hypostases*. So he explains himself in his second Letter to *Dionysius*: "I will speak to you, "says he, by *Enigma*, that if by accident this Letter happen to fall into "other hands, he may not, in reading, "understand it.

Minutius Felix made the same Observation after *Clemens*: "*Plato*, says he, "spake more clearly of God than any "other Philosopher; and his Doctrine "would be perfectly Divine, if he had "not spoil'd it by a mixture of the Religion establish'd by the Laws of his "Country. For, according to *Plato* in "*Timæus*, God is the Father of the "World, even by this being God. He is "Creator of the Soul, and of all things "as well Celestial as Terrestrial: But "that Philosopher does previously advertise, that 'tis difficult to find him "because of his infinite Power; and "that when he is found, it is impossible "to explain one's self concerning him "to the common People. Why impossible? Because dangerous. These few Words contain an Abridgment of our whole System: That *Plato* spake of God only with respect to the Creation: That he believ'd him to be the Father of the World, and consequently that the World is his Son: That he knew him better than other Philosophers: and that nevertheless he has spoil'd that Knowledg, by mixing with it the Errors of his Country, because he thought it too dangerous to speak his thoughts of it openly. That is, he had not liberty to speak his Mind; and to please a superstitious Populacy he was forc'd to make as many *Hypostases* and *Gods*, as he had discover'd Perfections in the World's Creator. In a word, to philosophize on the Origin of the World securely, he was oblig'd subtilly to feign a Genealogy of Gods, *a Father, a Begotten Son, a third proceeding from those two*, and to turn the whole *Cosmogony* into a mere *Theogony*.

We know *Proclus*, one of *Plato's* Disciples, maintain'd that his Master plac'd a Supreme God above this Trinity of Principles whereof we have been now speaking; which plainly enough shews, that under these three feign'd *Essences* or *Persons* he design'd to hide the several Perfections of the most High God, whom he believ'd to be but one Essence and one Person; but he multiply'd him after the manner of the Heathens, to shelter himself from the Rigour of the Laws.

It is not to be doubted but all the Philosophers had the same aim of preserving the *Unity* of God under a multitude of feign'd *Personalities*, without any danger to themselves. Unless any will suppose it to have been a witty Invention, which they fram'd for the better instructing and fixing

fixing the Minds of the common People, who are pleas'd with Wonders and Mysteries. One may indeed believe that they did it with a good intention, designing to place, instead of gross Polytheism, the several Properties of the True and most High God; that the People might insensibly receive an exchange which was so advantageous to them. And so much the worse for Christians, who have been bubl'd by this Eastern Philosophy, in taking literally a Method which was merely Allegorical. I will conclude this Reflection on the three *Platonick* Principles with this Observation of *Origen*, agreeing with the Doctrine of St. *Paul* (*Lib. 6. contra Celf.*) "That Philosophers "having in the Creation of the World, "beheld what is invisible in God (which "this Father calls the *Divine Ideas*) and "being rais'd from sensible to Spiritual "things, did plainly enough perceive "his Eternal Power and Godhead. But what are these invisible Excellencies which appear in the Creation? They are the three Principles, whereof *Plato* was pleas'd to make three *Hypostases* or *Persons*.

Dr. *Cudworth* saw the Contrivance of this Mystery, Pag. 590. of his *Intellectual System*: "The three *Hypostases* of the "*Platonists*, says he, do not seem to be "really any thing else than Infinite *Good-*"*ness*, infinite *Wisdom*, and infinite "*Power* and *Love*. *Irenæus*, *l.* 3. *c.* 46. owns the same Truth: "*Plato*, says he, "having given the Name of *Good* to the "Supreme Maker of all things, hath "herein laid down the *Goodness* of God "as the Principle and Cause of the Cre-"ation of the World. This Reflection of *Irenæus* takes place with respect to the other two Divine Propertys, which *Plato* ranks among the Causes of the World: So that we may say that *Plato* having call'd the first Author of all things, the *Good*, the *Reason* and *Soul* of the World, hath thereby laid down, *as the Principle of the Creation of the Universe*, the *Goodness*, *Wisdom*, and *Power* of God.

But the best Interpreter of this *Platonick Trinity* is *Galen*, in his third Book *de Usu Partium*; his Words are plain, and may be call'd the right Key of *Platonism*. "I do not, says he, make true "Religion and Piety towards God to "consist in sacrificing *Hecatombs*, or "in sending up the Smoke of much "Incense, but in knowing and making "known to others what God's *Wisdom*, "*Power* and *Goodness* are. For, in my "opinion, that God has been pleas'd to "fill the World with so many good "things, is a Mark of his *Goodness*, "which deserves our utmost Praise: "That he has found the way of putting "it into so good Order, is the highest "pitch of *Wisdom*; and that he could "execute so vast a design, is the effect "of Almighty *Power*. Nothing is plainer than this Comment: He fully explains the Doctrine of the Three Principles, without mixing any Philosophical Subtleties, or Cabalistick Mysteries, with it. Here all refers to the Creation of the World, and shews no more than a natural Trinity, which all may read in these three admirable Properties, which God has, if I may so speak, made visible in his Works.

And lastly *Clem. Alexan.* (*Lib. 5. Strom. p.* 547. *Edit. Lutet.* 1629.) fully shews *Plato*'s mind in the Definition he gives of the *Word*: ὁ λόγος, &c. "The *Word* "of the Father of all things, says he, "is not that which was utter'd (ὁ προ-"φορικὸς) but a *most evident Wisdom* and "*Goodness* of God, with an *Almighty* "and truly *Divine Power*. This is plain, here you have the *Wisdom*, *Goodness* and *Power*, whereof *Plato* made his Three Principles, and whereof *Clemens* makes only the *internal Word*, the *Word of the Father*, in opposition to the *utter'd Word*: So free and unlimited is this Allegorical Philosophy. Observe farther, That the words *most evident*, refer to what appears of God in the Creation of the World; which is properly the *Word* of God according to all the *Platonical* Allegorists.

As

As to the *Begotten Word*, which is not that *Wisdom*, nor that *Goodness*, nor that *Power*, which was manifested in the Creation of the World, what can it be but the *World* it self? Nevertheless, the Fathers believ'd the Prolation of this *Word* to be the true Generation; and consequently, when they spake of a *Begotten Son*, understood it of this *World*, without thinking of it. *Plato*, then, having so *personaliz'd* the several Operations of the Godhead, spake of many Gods to please the People, *Populo ut placerent quas fecisset fabulas*; reserving to himself the liberty of owning but one God, when he convers'd with the Learned, or, as appears by his Epistles, when he wrote to his Friends.

CHAP. VIII.

That the Pleroma *of the* Valentinians *was an Allegorical Theology: With a Digression concerning the* Fanaticism *of both the Antient and Modern* Gnosticks.

I Pass from the Philosophers to the Hereticks who imitated them. It is certain that there was a hidden and mystical Theology in the *Pleroma* of the *Valentinians*. That prodigious number of *Emanations*, which seems so monstrous an Opinion to us, was, at bottom, but either a System of the several Orders of Angels, who are often call'd *Æons*; I mean such a Celestial Hierarchy as that of *Dionysius* was: or that Collection of *Ideas*, those different Properties (Δυνάμεις, as *Valentin* calls them, *apud Iren. l.* 1. *c.* 5.) those several Dispensations, which they conceiv'd in one and the same God. For they did consider him, 1. without regard to the Creature, as incomprehensible, and retir'd into a *profound Silence*; that is, as not having yet spoken that efficacious *Word* which was to make the Creature: and then he call'd him the *Profound* and the *Silence*; that was the first Order of *Æons*. 2. They consider'd God with respect to the *intelligible* World, as having his *Understanding* fill'd with *Ideas*, Ideas being the Essence and the *Truth* of things, according to the *Platonists*: and then they call'd him the *Understanding* and the *Truth*; that was their second *Syzigy*. 3. They consider'd God with respect to the *sensible* World, as executing his Design, and speaking that powerful *Word*, which gave Life and Being to all Creatures: and then they call'd him *the Word* and *the Life*, that was their third *Syzigy*. 4. They consider'd God with respect to the *Spiritual* and *Evangelical* World, as working Redemption; and there they found the Mediator, *Jesus Christ Man*, with the new *Church*, which he made by his Preaching and Death: and then they call'd him the *Man*, and the *Church*; that was their fourth Alliance. But after all, these several *Emanations*, rightly taken, are but the several Respects in which they conceived one and the same God, who having been hid in an Abyss of Light, did outwardly manifest himself in these two admirable Works of the Old and New Creation.

That is the Testimony which *Irenæus*, *l.* 2. *c.* 15. gives of them. "The *Valentinians*, says he, after having divided their *Emanations*, did howe-"ver return to the Unity, holding that "all together made but one. And in *Lib.* 1. *c.* 6. the same Father's relating that *Ptolomy* gave the most High God two Wives, *Understanding* and *Will*, which they

they called the Father's two Powers, apparently shews, that *Ptolomy* fell into *Plato*'s Allegory, in ascribing *Wisdom* and *Power*, as two Properties inseparable from one and the same Spirit, to the *Good*, or Creator of all things: And I don't see why *Ptolomy* might not as well Allegorically say, that the supreme Father had two Wives, as *Philo*, in the like case, that the World had *God* for its Father, and *Knowledg* for its Mother.

But if all these several *Powers* of the *Valentinians* did not destroy the Unity of God, whence then comes it, you'l say, that their Doctrine was so abhor'd? The reason is apparent, *viz.* That in avoiding the Christian Simplicity, they run the Faith into terrible Confusion, exposing God's Unity to Peril by their idle Speculations.

As for the *Basilidians*, they did also allegorize on the word *Abraxas*, whereby they understood that Supreme Power from which all the other *Æons* or Spirits proceeded. This Name has in its *Greek* Letters the Number 365, which is that of the Days of the Year, or, according to *Basilides*, of the Celestial Orbs. And he intended to signify that *Abraxas*, or the most High God, was the Father of the Celestial Orbs, Ages, or *Æons*, and Creator of the Universe. 'Tis probable that this is a *Hebrew* Word, and that it comes from *Ab*, *Ben*, *Rouach*, *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*. *Menage* would, with his Etymological Sagacity, find no difficulty in proving this to be its Derivation; thus, *Ab*, *Ben*, *Roxach*, *Abenrach*, *Aberach*, *Abrach*; and, adding a *Greek* Termination, *Abrachas*, *Abraxas*. *Serenus* the Physician, of the Sect of the *Basilidians*, lengthening the Word, fram'd *Abracadabra* of it; which is another mysterious Name, which he made use of as an *Amulet*, or Preservative, for the Cure of all intermitting Fevers; almost as the Superstitious use some Words of the beginning of St. *John*'s Gospel, which they hang about the Patient's Neck, as I my self have seen. Now in as much as the *Basilidians* pass for the first Authors among Christians of the Discipline of the *Secret*, and of the *Platonick* Trinity, it is very likely that they design'd to hide it under this Allegorical and Symbolical Name. But it is also possible that this Name contains only the Gospel-Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whereon they allegoriz'd extravagantly, according to the Custom of that Time.

By this Essay which we have been making, it sufficiently appears, that we could give a rational Meaning to the other Orders of the *Æons*, wherewith the *Gnosticks* did also enlarge their System. With a little labour in taking off the Veil of Allegory, which covers the hidden Meaning of this mysterious Theology, one might easily enough discover, that the true aim of these Christian Philosophers was to set off the lowness of the Gospel by the suppos'd depths of their Mysteries. But we'll go no farther on this Article: The Sample given is sufficient. But if any one desires proof of this our Explication of *Valentin*'s *Æons*, that he conceiv'd them only as the several Affections of the Divine Understanding, or as so many Dispensations of Providence, let him but consult Chap. 12. of *Daneus de Hæresib.* To be brief, we'll here quote only the famous *Pearson* (*Vindic. Ignat. Par.* 2. *c.* 5.) "*Valentin*, says he, made "an open Profession of believing but "one God: and tho' *Tertullian* asserts "somewhat Rhetorically that this Here-"tick believ'd as many Gods as he "number'd *Æons*, that Father himself "did nevertheless own, that *Valentin*'s "*Æons* were nothing else but the Di-"vine Propertys and Affections, whereof "his Disciples afterwards made Personal "Substances. *Gallasius* had, before *Pear-son*, observ'd the same thing (*in Annotat. in lib.* 1. *Irenæi*) for he recites the Words of *Tertullian*. "*Ptolomy*, says that Fa-"ther, follow'd *Valentin*'s Doctrine, on-"ly he made Personal Substances, sub-"sisting distinctly from God, of what *Va-"lentin* had consider'd only as Affections

" and Ideas internal and intimate to the " Godhead.

Irenæus also informs us, that by these *Æons Valentin* understood only certain *Dispositions* and *Powers* of the most High God, (*Summi Dei διαθέσεις tantum quasdam, & δυνάμεις*:) which he clearly explains in his *L.* 1. *c.* 6. where he relates the System of the discreet *Valentinians*. " When, say they, the Supreme God " would produce any thing, he was in " that respect call'd *Father*; but because " his Productions are true, he was at the " same time called the *Truth*: and then, " when he would produce and manifest " himself, he was called the *Man*. The " *Man* by speaking begat the *Word*, " which is the first-born *Son*. All which shews that Allegory being undetermin'd, every one took it the way which best pleas'd him: But however, it appears that they all agree that these *Æons* are nothing else but God's several *Affections* or *Dispensations*. What's peculiar in this last Hypothesis, is, that *Man*, which signifies *God*, manifesting himself, utters the *Word*, his First-born. Which yet has a good Sense, according to *Mark* the *Valentinian*, who in Chap. 10. of the same Book says, " That God, to give a " visible Form to the invisible Gran- " dures which are in him, utter'd his " *Word* like himself. Understanding by the *Word* only the visible Form, which God takes to manifest himself in. So our *Quakers* understand no more by the *Word* than the Goodness of the Supreme God manifesting himself to Men.

This was the Opinion of the *Sabellians*, who by the *Christ* did not any way understand a *Man*, but only Divine Clemency and Heavenly Aid manifesting it self to Men in the Work of Redemption. It may perhaps also have been the Opinion of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who, as we have already seen, calls the *Word*, the *most manifest Goodness of God*. That of *Origen*, and of many other Allegorists, does not at all differ from it, since they did not so much believe in the Son of *Mary*, as in their *Theologiz'd Son*, as they speak; much slighting Faith and the sensible Gospel, as we shall shew hereafter, and valuing only *Contemplation*. This *Platonick* Fanaticism has *Cerinthus* for its Author, who carefully distinguish'd *Jesus* the Son of *Mary* from this *Christ*, or this Celestial Aid, which came to enlighten and guide Men; and it is now adopted by Father *Malebranche*, Dr. *More*, and Mr. *Norris*.

This last is a right *Platonick Fanatick*, who has brought disorder and confusion into both the Speculative part of Religion, and the Duties of Christian Piety. His several Treatises of Doctrine and of Morality, shew that the Dreams of a contemplative Man are capable of converting the most sensible Lights of Reason and Revelation into Smoak. Can we forbear judging of what he has written of the λόγος of *Plato*, as we judg of what he has written concerning the Love of God, which he makes to consist in such refin'd Contemplations and Enthusiasms as render Gospel-Morality (tho of it self so plain and natural) wholly impracticable. Fanaticism all over! And if we see it in the Morality of these Visionaries, why do we not perceive that their strain'd *Platonism* is no less the fruit of Mystical Theology? The Fathers were right *Quakers* in their System of the λόγος; and if we will not be *Quakers* in point of Morality, let us keep close to our Principles, and neither be so in the Doctrine of the *Word*, and such other speculative Points as have been render'd incomprehensible by too much refining of them. If I may say what I think, this Gallimaufry about the *Divine Word*, which is defin'd, (see the Treatise intitul'd, *Reason and Religion*) " An intelligible World, Archetype and " Ideal, or even the Essence of God, " as far as it is variously imitable, va- " riously exhibitive and representative of " all things which exist. This *Cant*, I say, is suspected by me, and I am tempted to believe, that under these specious Names,

Names, nothing more is given us than a fair Syſtem of my Underſtanding, with its Reaſon and Ideas; or to ſpeak better, its univerſal and unchangeable Natures, which the Philoſophers call'd the Reality and Truth of things, and whereof they made even the Eſſence of God. Yea, I dare venture to ſay, that 'tis Deiſm or Atheiſm diſguis'd. The Accuſation is heinous, and requires Proofs of the utmoſt evidence. Well, and we ſhall produce them. Read and weigh theſe Words (*ubi ſupra*, p. 209.) that Author ſays, "The Idea of a Triangle has a "determinate and immutable Nature, "ſuch as it is not in my power to make "the leaſt alteration in, ——which is a "certain Proof that it is not of my "making, for then it would be arbi-"trary, and I might change it as I "pleas'd; but that it is an abſolute Na-"ture, diſtinct from and independant of "my Underſtanding: And to ſay the "truth, it is nothing elſe than the Eſ-"ſence of God himſelf modify'd, and "as it is exhibitive and imitable in ſuch "and ſuch a manner, ſince nothing is "abſolutely immutable but God him-"ſelf; he alone being that Father of "Lights, in whom there is no ſhadow "of turning.

This is plain: The Idea of a *Triangle* is nothing elſe but the very Eſſence of God modify'd in ſuch a manner. Again, the Idea of an Owl is only this Divine Eſſence ſo modify'd; the Idea of a Lobſter is ſtill but a Modification of this Divine Eſſence; in a word, the Idea of all Beings is nothing elſe than the very Eſſence of God modify'd in ſuch or ſuch a manner: *Jupiter eſt quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris.* What do you call that? It's however on ſuch fine Diſcoveries that theſe Gentlemen value themſelves, confidently and triumphingly ſaying, *So true it is, that true Platoniſm is a good Preſervative againſt Socinianiſm.* Yes, ſay I, but under a pretence of preſerving us from *Socinianiſm*, we are rudely robb'd of Chriſtianity. Let's once more venture to ſpeak as we think. *Athenagoras*, *Tatian*, *Theophilus* of *Antioch*, with many others of venerable Rank and Antiquity, whom out of reſpect I do not name; theſe Fathers, whom our Moderns imitate with ſo much affectation, conſider'd the Chriſtian Religion only as a new Sect of Philoſophy, which under low and popular Similitudes, contain'd the moſt hidden Senſe and profoundeſt Myſteries of all ſorts of natural and divine Sciences; whereon they gave themſelves free ſcope, and explain'd the Scriptures, not as Interpreters, but as ſophiſtical Speculative Philoſophers, pretending to find *Plato*'s Myſteries in certain Terms, much as our Chymiſts pretend they find their Art in *Geneſis*, or in the Hiſtory of the Creation. *Cabala* every where.

I ſhall be exclaim'd againſt, as abuſing thoſe Great Men, but wrongfully. All our Criticks ſay worſe of them than that. For not to mention *Daille*, *Huetius*, and *Petavius*, who are not thought their Friends; Dr. *Bull* will ſuffice, as he is indiſputably one of their greateſt Admirers, and if we may ſay it, their penſion'd Apologiſt, his Teſtimony will be worth ten thouſand others. * He ſays of *Origen*, "That he ſometimes "ſpake too freely, and "like a Sceptick: Of *Tertullian*, "That he "little car'd how he ſpake of God, pro-"vided he did but contradict his Adver-"ſary; and that an Egg's not more "like an Egg, than the Expreſſions of "that Father reſemble the extrava-"gant Conceits of *Valentin*: Of *Lactantius*, "That he was but a Rhetor, igno-"rant in Theology: Of St. *Jerom*, "That he was but a Jeſter and a Sophiſt. Indeed there are ſcarce any of 'em whom he has not a fling at, when he's not pleaſed with their Theology. Their *Arian* or *Gneſtical* Expreſſions give him ſo much trouble, that it puts him almoſt always out of humour. What might we not ſay

* *Peruſe his* Defence of the Council of *Nice*.

of their poor Interpretations of Scripture? They went ſtrangely to work on it, if we may believe St. *Jerom.* Monſ. *Le Clerc* recites two Paſſages of him, which will come in very properly here; one of them is in *Tom. X. p.* 492. where that Father ſays *(in Apol. pro lib. cont. Jovin. p.* 106. *& ſeq. Ed. Gryph.)* "'Tis one thing to write in order to "diſpute, and another to write for In-"ſtruction. In the former Method, "Diſpute is very extenſive, and the "endeavour is only to anſwer the Ad-"verſary. Now this is propos'd then, "that——we ſpeak in one manner and "act in another, *&c.* In the latter an "open and ingenuous Behaviour is ne-"ceſſary, *&c. Origen, Methodius, Eu-"ſebius* and *Apollinarius*, have written "much againſt *Celſus* and *Porphyry*. Ob-"ſerve what Arguments and what "doubtful Problems they make uſe of, "to overthrow the Writings compos'd "by the Spirit of the Devil. And that "becauſe they are neceſſitated to ſay, "not what they think, but what the "Diſpute requires *(non quod ſentiunt, "ſed quod neceſſe eſt)* they contradict "the *Gentiles*". The other Paſſage may be found in the *XII Tom.* of the *Bib. Univ. p.* 146. and is taken out of St. *Jerom*'s Letter to *Nepotian*, *p.* 14. "I was, "ſays he, once deſiring *Gregory Nazi-"anzen*, who was formerly my Maſter, "to explain to me what was meant by "the * Second-firſt Sabbath in St. *Luke*; "he pleaſantly anſwered me, I'll inform "you concerning that in the Church, "where, when all the People are giving "me their Acclamations, you'l be con-"ſtrain'd to know what you do not "know, or if you alone are ſilent, "you'l be accounted a Fool.

To have yet more convincing Proofs of the pitiful manner of the Fathers explaining the Scriptures, one need but ſee their Puerile Interpretations of theſe Words, *regnavit a ligno Deus*, which they apply to the Croſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*: and on many other Texts, whence they ſubtlely draw *Plato*'s λόγος. They are no more than a Train of flat and forc'd Explications, as that which they give of theſe Words, *ex utero te genui*, &c. Again, ſee how *Tertullian* makes, what *David* ſaid of the *Palm-Tree*, ſute to a *Phœnix*. The Hebrew Word is not equivocal, and it's likely that *Tertullian* was deceiv'd by the double ſenſe of the *Greek* Word: No, 'twas deſignedly that he played upon it, not ſeeking ſo much the ſenſe of the Scripture, as an opportunity of finding in the Scriptures one of the greateſt Wonders Paganiſm ever ſpake of. Neither were the Fathers ſo ignorant in the Scriptures, but that a little good Judgment would have ſhewn them the natural Signification of theſe Words, *eructavit cor meum*, &c. It is not God the Father, but *David* who there ſpeaks; however they were willing upon occaſion, to find the ſubtileſt Doctrine of *Plato*'s School in this ordinary expreſſion of Scripture, or make the Heathens believe, that there was nothing ſo great in their Philoſophy, which was not hidden in thoſe Scripture-Expreſſions, which to us ſeem plaineſt and leaſt myſterious.

But Dr. *Bull* finds admirable Expedients to ſave the Reputation of the Fathers. He diſtinguiſhes between *the Witneſs of the Faith*, and the *Interpreter of the Scriptures*; and always taking for granted, that they are good Witneſſes of the Faith, he grants that they are ſometimes bad Interpreters of Scripture; *which is reſpectfully ſtabbing them with a Dagger*. So in *pag.* 140. alledging for Proof of the Divinity of the *Holy Ghoſt*, a Paſſage out of *Irenæus*, where that Father miſtakenly quotes the Prophet *Iſaiah*: "We do not trouble our ſelves, "ſays he, with *Irenæus*'s bad Interpre-"tation; for we are not conſulting that "Father as an Interpreter, always happy "in

* *The* Engliſh *Teſtament hath it, the Second Sabbath after the Firſt.*

" in explaining the Scripture, but as an " irreproachable Witness of Apostolical " Tradition. I confess bad Interpreters may be good Witnesses of the Faith of their Age. But it must at the same time be granted me, that the Faith whereof they testify, is a too much suspected Faith, when it depends on the Evidence of so bad Interpreters. I say bad, for it is not only one or two Passages mistaken by these *Doctors* which we are speaking of, but a Million. Dr. *Bull* himself owns some of them concerning the *Holy Ghost*; how many would there be, if we should collect those which they have misapply'd concerning the *Word?*

But what do I say, That bad Interpreters may nevertheless be good Witnesses of the Faith of their Age? Monsr. *le Vassor in his Traité de l'Examen, ch.* 1. *p.* 10. is not so ready to grant it; he denys, and I believe he's in the right, That any Advantage can be had from the Testimony of the Ancients, towards the Decision of the Points now controverted, because of the Confusion which arose from their Philosophy: " *Origen* and St. *Au-* " *gustin*, says he, have so perplex'd The- " ology, one in the *Eastern* and the o- " ther in the *Western* Churches, where " they both had their Disciples and Ad- " mirers, by endeavouring to adjust " Christianity to Philosophy; that we " meet with a thousand Difficulties in " determining, what those two Authors, " and those who have follow'd their " Steps, really thought on several im- " portant points of Religion. They " give nothing but Allegorical Senses " to the Texts of the Holy Scripture; " their Explications appear so very far " distant from what the Sacred Writers " meant, that one knows not where to " begin, to disintangle the true Doctrine " of the Apostles, from the particular " Speculations of the greatest part of " those, to whom we are sent as to ir- " reproachable Witnesses of what was " believ'd in their time. If it be so, I don't see that *Justin* and *Irenæus* can be better Interpreters of the Scripture than *Origen* and St. *Augustin*: they were not less corrupted by Philosophy, nor less confus'd and perplex'd; and consequently they cannot be good Witnesses of what was believ'd in their Time: For how is it possible to distinguish the sound Doctrine of the Apostles in their Writings from their *Platonick* Speculations?

Let us therefore without hesitation, rank all these fine contemplative Men, as well Ancient as Modern, in the order of the *Gnosticks*, and return to treat of them. Lastly, *Clemens Alexandrinus* (*Strom. l.* 5. *p.* 587. *Edit. Lutet.* 1629.) explaining that Text of St. *John*, *The only Son who is in the Bosom of the Father*, gives us plainly to understand what was the Language of the *Valentinians*: " St. " *John*, says he, having called the in- " visible and unspeakable Excellencies " of the Godhead, *the Bosom of the Fa-* " *ther*, some have thence taken occasi- " on to name him the *Profound* (Βαθυν) " as containing all things in his *Bosom*, " and being impenetrable and infinite. *Novatian* reciting the same Text (*de Trinit. c.* 26.) quotes it twice in the same Chapter thus, *The Son hath revealed the Bosom of the Father to us. Tertullian adv. Prax. c.* 8. did the same, that is, in the *Valentinian* manner: That the Son hath revealed to us the impenetrable Depths of the Father. Read the 51*st* Heresy of *Epiphanius*, in the 22*d* and 28*th* Chapters, where may be distinctly seen that *Valentin*'s Fable of the thirty *Æons*, was allegorically taken from the Scriptures.

Some may perhaps wonder, that they so disposed their Deitys by Couples: They therein imitated the Heathens, who attributed both Sexes to each of their false Gods (*Rep. des Lett. Tom.* 1. *p.* 84.) But however that be, it ought not to seem strange to those who know that they allegoriz'd. *Synesius*, tho a Christian and a Bishop, made no scruple to call God Male and Female (*Hymn* 2. & 3. Σὺ γὰρ ἄρσην, σὺ δ' ἄρρην· σὺ δ' ἔμ-

πνους,

λυς, tu Mas, tu Femina) (an Opinion so much blam'd by *Lactantius* in *Orpheus*, *l.* 4. *c.* 8.) He calls him also, "That "which *brings forth*, and which *is* "*brought forth*, the Father of himself, "Son of himself, and to conclude, Fa-"ther of the *Æons*. *Valentin* himself would not have said more. His fourth Hymn is diverting; He there sets the whole Trinity to work on the Begetting of the *Son*, particularly the *Holy Ghost*, whom he brings in as a mediating Power, to be assistant to the *Father* and the *Son*. For after having said to the latter, "I praise you with the Father "and with you, I praise that other "Fruit, which the Father could not "hinder himself from putting forth, "when he intended to produce you: He speaks to the *Holy Ghost* thus; "It is "of you I speak, fecund Wisdom, me-"diating Principal, holy Respiration, "Center of the Father, and also Cen-"ter of the Son; you may be called "altogether Mother, Sister and Daugh-"ter; you came to the assistance of the "Father, who could not beget his Son "without you (*obstetricata es abditam* "*radicem*:) For the Father designing "to pour himself into the Son, that "pouring was the Bud of a Third, who "was a Medium between the *Father* "and the *Son*. You see Poets are not very scrupulous, neither were their Imitators the *Valentinians* any more so than they.

Synesius was not without Company in expressing himself like the *Valentinians*: If his Hymns are full of these Cabalistick Terms, the *Profound*, the *Silence*, the *Ineffable*, &c. (Βυθὸς, σιγὴ, ἀῤῥητος, ἀπύτῳ ἀυτπατῳ) we find also the same Cant in many other *Platonick* Fathers. Do they speak of the incomprehensible Nature of God? you presently see the *Profundity* and the *Silence*. Are they to say, how God passed from that State of Silence to a State of Revelation? You shall there see every where this inseparable Pair of *Æons*, the *Internal Word*, and the *Uttered-Word*. *Clemens* and *Origen* expressly distinguish the *Word-God* from another *Word*, which was made *Flesh*. In short, nothing so much resembles the *Gnostick* Heresy, as *Tertullian*'s two Gods, the *Rationalis* and the *Sermonalis*, the *Rational God*, and the *sonorous* and *speaking God*. One may also range in the same Category, the *Verbum silens*, and the *Verbum sonans* of *Marius Victorinus*: And many other chimerical Ideas of the Antients, which, tho they would be tolerable in a figurative and allegorical Stile, yet become insupportable and worse than *Valentine*'s *Æons*, by being personaliz'd, and made Spirits distinct from the supreme God.

This is the Case: Some Philosophers in endeavouring to avoid the Opinions of the *Ebionites*, thereby fell into so ridiculous an extreme, as to reject the God and the Messiah of the *Jews*: They spake ill of the God who had given the Law, and pretended (*Irenæus l.* 1. *c.* 25.) that the *Christ* was the Son of another superiour God; and therefore apply'd themselves to sublime Generations of the Substance of the most High God, and to other such extravagant Conceits: which the Orthodox greedily embracing out of hatred of the *Jews*, and of Judaizing Hereticks; at first they were only mystical senses, to set off the Glory of *Jesus Christ*, but afterwards these metaphorical Generations degenerated to real Generations; and what had at first been conceiv'd only as Operations and Powers, was converted into *Hypostases* and Personal Substances.

To conclude; as I make no difference between the *Jewish Cabals*, and the *Valentinian Pleroma*; these two Systems are either equally ridiculous, if examined according to the strict literal sense, or equally rational, if you seek in them the concealed sense, which lies under the Bark of Allegory. For 'twas indeed the same Infatuation for Allegory, which drew the *Jews* as well as Christian Hereticks into this Cabalistical Philosophy, the

the outſide whereof appears to us ſo very extravagant and whimſical. The one compos'd their *Pleroma* of certain Pairs of *Æons*. The other do as much with their *Sephiroth*, or *Enumerations*, which they range by two and two. We cannot then ſay otherwiſe either of the *Jews* or *Valentinians*, than that under theſe Theological Fictions, they deſign'd to conceal their true Doctrine concerning Coſmogony and the Origin of things. Thoſe *Eaſtern* Philoſophers never believed that the World was made out of nothing: Creation out of nothing was then unheard of. As they held that all Subſtance that is in the World had always exiſted, and that the firſt Cauſe included all other Natures, in the Immenſity of its own; they underſtood by their *Sephiroth* only the *Emanations* of all Beings from the ſubſtance of the ſupreme Being. And as *Emanations* are of two kinds, one of which reſpect the ſenſible World, and the other the intelligible; by the firſt they intended to expreſs only the ſeveral Forms of all Creatures, which are as ſo many Emanations from the firſt Subſtance; and by the other, they deſigned to repreſent the Ideas of the Divine Underſtanding, which are the Emanations of Eternal Wiſdom, which they call'd Exemplars, the Inſtruments and Means of the Creator's Power. So that one cannot doubt, but that with a little Application, one might diſcover in the Cabaliſtick *Emanations*, either the diverſe Diſpenſations of Providence, or the eſſential Properties of the Creator; and particularly the three which gave birth to the *Platonick Trinity*, *Goodneſs*, *Wiſdom* and *Power*, which are in effect found among the ten Divine Names, whereof their *Sephiroth* are compos'd. For after all that has been ſaid, 'twere Obſtinacy not to own, That what's to be born with in the *Jewiſh* Cabal, and which is raſhly applied to the Chriſtian *Trinity*, is borrow'd from *Plato's Coſmogony*, and taken from the grounds of the ſoundeſt and antienteſt Philoſophy concerning the Origin of the World. So that one may, without fear of miſtaking, aſſert that the Cabal is nothing elſe but a Mixture, which has been made of *Jewiſh* Superſtitions with *Platonick* Speculations. As to the reſt, conſiſting in the Science or Myſtery of Numbers, of Points, Syllables and *Letters*, which they pretend to have taken from certain Books aſcrib'd to *Eſdras*; it's what we call the Viſions and Dreams of thoſe People.

When all is done, what could Proteſtants gain, in citing againſt us the *Cabala* and Writings of the *Rabbins?* Do not the Papiſts make uſe of the ſame Authority to ſupport their *Tranſubſtantiation?* For in truth, 'tis juſt as much found there as the Trinity is. 'Tis eaſy finding all ſorts of Myſteries in thoſe Obſcurities. What do Proteſtants ſay when thoſe Chimera's are objected to them? You need but read the Dialogues, where Dr. *Stillingfleet* compares the *Trinity* with *Tranſubſtantiation*. He extricates himſelf very well (*p.* 32. of the firſt Part) in rejecting this Cabal, as having no Authority. There *Galatinus* is treated as a Plagiary, and as an Author who ought not to find any Credit among civilized People. The pretended *Rabbins*, who lived before the Coming of *Jeſus Chriſt*, are made a Jeſt: And it's juſtly ſuppoſed, that the *Jews* cannot reckon that among their Doctrines, which is one of their ſtrongeſt Objections againſt Chriſtianity. Ah! good God, and is not the Trinity likewiſe one of that ſort of Objections, which the *Jews* make againſt Chriſtians? By what Machine ſhall we then make it one of their Doctrines? Shall *Galatinus* have more Authority, to make us receive that as a known Doctrine of the *Jews*, than *Tranſubſtantiation?* and ſhall the Paraphraſes be more antient, and the *Cabala* more authentick, when uſed in diſ-

diſpute againſt the *Socinians*, than when we are to anſwer the Papiſts Objections? So they deal without Modeſty or Honeſty, *ſecundum currentia Tempora.*

CHAP. IX.

Plato's *Syſtem explain'd.*

I Return to the Syſtem of *Plato*, which I ſhall endeavour to unfold. That Philoſopher admitted of three ſorts of Divine *Eſſences*, which he call'd *three Principles* or *three Gods*. The firſt is the *Supreme God*, to whom the two others owe Honour and Obedience, becauſe he is their Father and their Creator. The ſecond is the *viſible God*, Miniſter of the inviſible, and Creator of the World. The third is called the *World*, or the *Soul* which animates the World, to whom ſome give the Name of *Demon*. To return to the ſecond, which he alſo nam'd the *Word*, *Underſtanding*, or *Reaſon*; he conceiv'd two ſorts of *Words*, one which dwelt in God from all Eternity, whereby God did from all Eternity incloſe all ſorts of Virtues in his Boſom, doing all things with *Wiſdom*, with *Power*, and with *Goodneſs*: For being infinitely perfect, he hath, in this *internal Word*, all the Ideas, and Forms of created Beings. The other *Word*, which is the *external* and *uttered Word*, is, according to him, nothing elſe than that Subſtance which God put forth from his Boſom, or which he *begat* to frame the Univerſe by it. It is in this reſpect that *Mercurius Triſmegiſtus* ſaid that the World is *conſubſtantial* with God. And it is remarkable that *Irenæus*, tho a Chriſtian, ſays of Matter, what the other Fathers have ſaid of the *Word* only, "That God utter'd "it, and put it forth. (*Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 29.) He followed the above-noted Principles of *Plato*. Bp *Huet* aſcribes the ſame Opinion to *Origen* (*Origen. Quæſt.* 2.) That the Matter which God made uſe of to form the World by, was from all Eternity emanated from his own Subſtance.

Many of *Plato*'s Diſciples having embrac'd Chriſtianity, they fail'd not to attribute to *Jeſus Chriſt* all that this Philoſophy attributed to the *ſecond God*, and particularly the Creation of the *World*, maintaining that *Jeſus Chriſt* was this *ſecond Nature* of their Divine *Plato*, who had exiſted before the Creature, and had received order from his Father to produce it from Nothing: That this *Word* had ſince appear'd to the *Patriarchs*, as the Miniſter of the moſt High God; and that at laſt having aſſum'd a Body in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*, he had preached the Goſpel to Men. They thought they ſhould thereby infinitely raiſe the Honour of the *Meſſiah*, and draw the *Platoniſts* the more eaſily to the Chriſtian Religion: Beſides that, 'twould have been grievous to them, that, after having ſtudied ſo long, and made ſo fine a Figure in *Plato*'s School, it ſhould be ſaid that they had ſtudied in vain.

'Tis eaſy producing Proofs of this from both Philoſophers and Chriſtians. As to the former, one need but read *Timæus Locrus*, from whence *Plato* had his Doctrine. That antient *Philoſopher* (*De Anima Mundi*) firſt ſuppoſes a moſt good *Principle*, whom he calls *God*: Then he diſtinguiſhes three Orders of Things, 1. The *Idea* or Form, which is eternal in God, and which is the *perpetual*

tual Pattern of all things begotten, and liable to change: That's the first *Word*, the *internal* and *intelligible Word*. 2. *Matter*, whereby he understands that Substance which God put forth out of himself, destitute of Form, which others have called the *second Word*, or the *uttered Word*. 3. Having consider'd the *Idea* as the *Father*, and *Matter* as the *Mother*, he holds, that of these two Principles a third is fram'd, who is their *Son*, which he calls the *Sensible*, or the *sensible World*, to distinguish it from the *intelligible*, and which others have call'd the Soul (or Spirit), which animates the *World*, and the *Order* of Nature. Thence he concludes that there is but one World, that this World is the *only Son of God* (μονογενὴς) that it is perfect, that it is indu'd with a *Soul*, and with *Reason* (ἔμψυχον τε καὶ λογικὸν.) God, "says he, intending to produce a "most fair God, made him a *begotten* "*God* (τὸν ἐποίει Θεὸν γεννατὸν.) *Phurnutus* gives the same Elogy to the World (*C.* 27. *De Natura Deorum*) "The "World, says he, is the only Son of "God (μονογενὴς.)

The Author of *Mercurius Trismegistus* so exactly suites his Language to that of these Philosophers, that one cannot in the least doubt but that he designs to speak of the *World* under the Name of the *Son of God*, which he gives it. *Lactantius* suffer'd himself to be deceiv'd by it, according to the good Custom of the Fathers, who apply'd every thing to *Jesus Christ*, greedily receiving whatever seem'd to favour their *Platoniz'd* Christianity. This is the Passage, such as it is, in that Father (*Divin. Instit. l.* 4. *c.* 6.) "The Lord, says *Mercurius*, and "the Creator of all things, whom "we call *God*, because he has made a "second *visible and sensible God*; this "Lord, I say, having made this the "first and the only one, he appear'd to "him beautiful, and full of all sorts of "good things, and he sanctified him, "and loved him as his *only Son*. He who is not wilfully blind must here observe the *sensible World*, as the *only Son* of the Creator.

Now it is apparent that these Philosophers spake thus of the *World*, because they believ'd it created, in opposition to the Opinion of *Ocellus Lucanus*, who indeed holds, in his Book *de Universi Natura*, *cap.* 1. That the *World* was not begotten (*negat fuisse genitum*, γεννητὸν.) And in the 2*d* Chapter he expresly says, that the World is *unbegotten* (*ingenitus*, ἀγέννητον) meaning, that it is eternal, and that it never was created. Thence it is that those who follow'd the other Opinion, held that there was none but God who was unbegotten (*ingenitus*, ἀγέννητον) that as to the *World*, it was *begotten*, being the *only Son* of God. Hence came that famous distinction of the *Platonists* between the *ingenitus* and the *genitus*; having apply'd to the *Father*, and to the *Son*, what the Philosophers had said of *God* and of the *World*, because they did not apprehend this Allegorical Philosophy, and had not read this Lesson of *Phurnutus*, (*ubi supra Cap.* 35.) *That the Antients subtily Philosophiz'd on the Nature of the World by Symbols and Enigma's.* *Salust* the Philosopher (*de Diis & Mundo*, *Cap.* 2.) calls these Enigma's *Theological Fables*; and the Commentator on this Philosopher observes on this Place, that *Plato* follow'd these Fables which belong to Theology, leaving those which contain the Mysteries of the ordinary Causes and Effects of Nature, to the Poets. It's among these Theological Fables that you'l find the ground of modern Theology, and of those fine Mysteries of the *Emperichoresis*, of the *God of God*, of *Light of Light*, and of *a Son existing as soon as the Father*. These Sources are to be found particularly in *Salust*, Cap. 2, *&* 13.

Apuleius is another of those who very well understood *Plato*'s Doctrine. "*Pla*-"*to*, says he, (*De Dogmate Platonis*) "supposes three Principles of all things,

" *God*, *Matter*, and *Forms*, which he " calls *Ideas*: *God* incorporeal and ineffable, who is the Creator and the Father; *Matter* increatable, incorruptible " and infinite, which is neither corporeal " nor incorporeal; and *Ideas*, that is " to ſay, the Forms of things, which " are ſimple, eternal, and incorporeal. Then he makes him divide into three Orders, what he calls the firſt Subſtances, viz. *God*, *Underſtanding*, and the *Soul*. Laſtly he obſerves that *Plato* ſometimes aſſerts, that the World is without Beginning, and ſometimes that it had an Origin, and was *begotten*. Which does not imply any Contradiction, the *intelligible Platonick World* being eternal, but the *ſenſible* and *corporeal World* having been begotten.

It is the ſame with the *Word*: Some have ſaid it was eternal, having taken its Eternity from the *intelligible* and *ideal World*: Others ſuppos'd, *that there had been a time wherein it was not*; taking its beginning from the Origin of the viſible World. And thoſe who believ'd it eternal, agree, as you ſee very well, with thoſe who believ'd it form'd in time, while the one intended to ſpeak of the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, of the *internal Word*; and the others of the λόγος προφορικὸς, of the *begotten Word* put forth when God intended to create the World. So true it is that the Syſtem of the *Word* was made by the Model of the Syſtem of the *World*. As to the World, this is the Obſervation of *Curio* (in fol. 35, *&c.* of his *Araneus*:) " If " all things are eternal, the Opinion of " the *Peripatetics* concerning the World's " Eternity proves true: —— For ſince " God created the World, and that no" thing ſtrange or unexpected can hap" pen to him, what Inconvenience is " there in ſaying, that what was made " in time was in him before all time? " God is of himſelf: The Beings which " the *Greeks* call *Ideas*, and we call " Forms, are ſo in God, that they are " nothing in themſelves. ——— Now " before the World was made, it " was nothing in it ſelf, but in God, " in that vaſt Nature, in that *ideal* " Model, where all things *always* have " been, and *always* are —— The Pre" ſence of this Univerſe not being ſepa" rable from the immenſe and eternal " Wiſdom of God. ——— To conclude, " after the World was made, it had a " double Exiſtence, one it ſelf, with " reſpect to all things exiſting in time; " another in God, becauſe nothing can " exiſt out of his Eternity and Wiſdom. All which does in all reſpects agree with the *Word*: Before it was begotten or utter'd, it was nothing in it ſelf, it had no *Hypoſtaſis*, it ſubſiſted only in God, in the Idea of that vaſt Nature in which all things have been from all Eternity: But after it was put forth, it had a double Being (or Exiſtence) the one in God, as he is himſelf the Model and Archetype of all things which exiſt; the other in it ſelf, as it is the *Firſt-born* of all Creatures. Whence it appears, that the *Arians* and *Athanaſians* deſtroying each other in ſo brutal a manner as they did, was from a mere Miſtake.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Philo *Examin'd.*

WE ought to rank *Philo* amongſt the *Platonick* Philoſophers, ſeeing it is certain that he follows exactly the Ideas of *Plato* about the *Word* of God: To be convinc'd hereof, you need only read his Book *de Temulentia*, where he puſheth on very far his *Allegory* of a Spiritual Marriage between *God* and *Wiſdom*, ſaying, that the latter was deliver'd of an *only* and well-beloved *Son*, that is the *ſenſible World*. He makes uſe of the ſame Expreſſion in the Book *of the Life of* Moſes, where he calls the *World*, the *moſt perfect Son* of God. One of our Authors (*Steph. le Moine in Notis ad Hippolyti Sermonem*) hath ſincerely acknowledg'd this Truth: "It is true, ſaith he, "that *Philo* the *Jew* hath often ſpoke "of a λόγος; for he calls the Angels "the *Words* of God, and what is more, "he calls the World ſo (λόγον Θεῦ.) "But *Philo* borrow'd theſe ways of Ex- "preſſion from the *Platoniſts*: for "dwelling at *Alexandria*, where there "were many of theſe Philoſophers, he "took from their Opinions very many "things which he inſerted in his Writ- "ings. As to *Joſephus*, his Studies "were wholly different; for not having "had any Commerce with the *Plato-* "*niſts*, you cannot diſcover in him that "Genius and Inclination to *Allegory*, ſo "much obſerv'd in *Philo*; ſo that we "cannot trace any thing of a λόγος "in him.

It is objected that *Philo* hath given the Name of *God* to the *Word* of *Plato*; which he had not done, if he had underſtood the *World* by it. "'Tis re- "markable, ſaith *Cudworth* in his *Intel-* "*lect. Syſt.* p. 549. that *Philo*, altho a "great Enemy to *Polytheiſm*, doth not "ſtick to call the *Divine Word*, accord- "ing to the *Platoniſts*, a *ſecond God*, δεύ- "τερον Θεόν, without thinking to thwart "his Religion, and the firſt Command- "ment of God. But this Author excuſeth *Philo* but ill, ſaying, "That the "Commandment ſpeaks only of created "Gods, whereas *Philo* held his *ſecond* "*God* to be eternal, and conſequently an "uncreated God. It is abſurd to think that a *Jew* would have admitted of a *ſecond* uncreated *God*, as if there could be many *uncreated*. *Cudworth* over-lookt, that *Philo* ſpeaking as a *Platoniſt*, *allegorizeth* upon the *intelligible* World, which he calls the *ſecond God*, inaſmuch as he looks upon it as an Emanation of the Divine Underſtanding; even as the Plan and the Idea of a Building is the Emanation of the Underſtanding of an Architect, that intends to build it according to this Image. Which is a Compariſon very familiar to the *Platonicks*, as you will find it in *Philo himſelf*, in the beginning of his Book *de Mundi Opificio*. "The "*intelligible* World, ſaith he, is nothing "elſe but the *Word of God* preparing it "ſelf to create the World; even as an "*intelligible City* is nothing elſe but the "Reaſoning of the Architect, that de- "ſigns to build a City according to the "Plan that he form'd of it in his Mind. Now can any one be ignorant that this *internal Word*, this City, or this *intelligible* World, are nothing elſe but the Underſtanding of the Architect, and conſequently the Architect himſelf? From whence we diſcover the reaſon why *Philo*, who own'd the *ſecond God* of the *Platoniſts*, would not *platonize* yet further, being unwilling to admit of their third *God*, for fear of contradicting his Religion,

which could not allow the created World to be a God, the *Platonists* calling it κτίσμα, a *Creature*. If he went no further, 'tis because he might carry on his *Allegory* so far as to the making of a *second God* of the Image which is in the Divine Understanding, and which is God himself: But he could not without danger carry it on as far as the *visible World*, which is a *Creature*, so as to make it a *third God*; seeing this *third God*, as *Petavius* remarks, (*Annot. ad Synes. in Calv. Encomium*) is nothing else in the opinion of the *Platonists* and *Stoicks*, but the *sensible World* only, (*Cicero* 2. *de Natura Deor.*) And is the same that *Philo* calls the *only Son*, whose Father is God, and his Mother, Wisdom; which ought to be distinguish'd from that other, which the same Author calls the *Word of God*, and the *intelligible World*. I say, the *Word*, this being the Name he always gives to the *intelligible World*, never calling it *the Son*, as he doth the *sensible World*. See *Maldon. in Joh.* 1. 1.

But when *Philo* sometimes gives the Name of *God* to the *Soul of the World*, he understands by the *Soul of the World* no more, as *Cudworth* hath own'd, than the *Word* it self, or the *second God*, to whom he might give different Names, according to the diversity of Notions that he form'd, either of God, or of the *Wisdom*, or *Power*, &c. But however it be, 'tis always whilst he considers the thing in God, and never out of God, nor in the created World. In this same Sense St. *John* said, that the *Word* that made all things, was in God, and that the *Life* or the *Soul* was in that *Word*, not distinguishing at all the *Soul* from the *Word*, as the *Platonists* did.

You may judg by this whether Mr. *Le Clerc* had good ground to quote *Philo* in his Paraphrase upon St. *John*, as one of those who were not ignorant of the Mystery of *Three* in the Deity. *Philo* having said first, That in the literal Sense, the three Men that appear'd to *Abraham* were three Angels, he afterwards goes on to the *hidden* and *allegorick Sense*; where he saith, that it is God accompany'd by his two *Powers*, whereof the one is that *Power* that created the World, the other that Wisdom which conducts and governs it. "God, saith he, between these two "Powers presents to an enlighten'd "Soul sometimes one *Image* only, some- "times three: For our Soul seeth but "one Image, when being purified by "Contemplation, she raiseth her self "above all Numbers, and advanceth to "that pure and simple Idea, which is "one, and independent of all others. "On the contrary, the Soul considers "three of them, when not being as "yet initiated in the Mysteries of the "first Order, she stops at the smaller; "*viz.* when not being capable of com- "prehending him who is consider'd in "himself, and without any foreign Aid, "she seeks him in his several Relations of "Creator and King. The Mystery of Three then, according to him, is for low Souls, who are not capable of comprehending God in his Unity, independently of all Creature, and that seek him in the Works of Creation and Providence. But the great Mystery of purified Souls, is to raise themselves, by a Contemplation transcending all Creatures, towards that only and simple Idea that hath nothing common with the rest.

Lastly he pretends that there is a third Sense, differing from that of the *Contemplation*, which he seems besides to call the Letter of the Scripture, according to which, 'tis *he who is* with his two Powers. But this last cannot be the *literal* Sense, seeing it would be contradictory to say, that in the *literal* Sense they were three Angels; and yet in the same Sense it was *he who is* with his two Powers. Besides, that by this means he would confound this last Sense with the second, which yet he distinguisheth carefully. We ought then to say, that this last Sense, if we would distinguish it well from the other two, must be the Sense of the *Oeconomy*. That is to say, tha

that they are indeed three Angels, but that the firſt of them bears the Name of *Jehova*, and repreſents his Perſon. It is for this reaſon he aſſures, that this Senſe is agreeable to the Scriptures account, becauſe it is the ordinary Stile of the Scripture, to give the Name of *Jehova* to that Angel in whom God hath put his Name. That Senſe is not the *literal* one, which owns but three Angels only as to their Nature; nor the *ſublime* Senſe, that finds there God himſelf with his ſundry Relations of a *Creator* and *King*: But it is an *Oeconomical* Senſe, which makes the firſt (who is but an Angel by his Nature) to be *Jehova* in reſpect to his Office, becauſe he bears the Name of *Jehova*, and ſpeaks by his Authority. Whereas the other two Angels are not conſider'd here but as two Powers of the Supreme God; that is to ſay, as Miniſters of him who repreſents *Jehova*. And as ſuch they are ſent to deſtroy *Sodom*, this Execution being beneath the Majeſty of the firſt.

We need conſult only *Philo* himſelf, to know what he underſtands by theſe Divine Powers, and to be convinc'd that he intends no Nicety whilſt he makes them to be two or three; but follows the Text herein, which ſpeaks here of three Angels. Elſewhere he reckons a greater Number of 'em: For in two other Books of his (*de Opificio & de Profugis*) he gives us clearly to underſtand, that by the Powers wherewith God is accompanied, he means only Angels, ſeeing he makes them ſhare the Creation of Man with the Supreme God; for this reaſon, becauſe the Supreme God would not be the Author of what is evil in Man. He therefore left to the Angels the care of making the mortal part of his Soul, which is ſubject to Paſſions; reſerving to himſelf alone the ſuperior part, where Reaſon hath Dominion. It was in this ſenſe, according to him, that God ſpake in the Plural, *Let Us make Man according to our Image.* You according to the Image of the Creature, in making him capable of Evil; but I according to the Image of the Deity, in making him capable of Good. And for the ſame reaſon he attributes ſometimes the Creation of the World to this firſt Angel, whom he calls the *Word*, or the *Son of God*, ſuppoſing always that this Work, how excellent ſoever in it ſelf, yet was beneath the Divine Majeſty, and that God could not put his hand to it without injuring his Greatneſs. Could ſo able a Philoſopher as *Philo* be capable of giving a Task, which he thought unworthy of God, to Powers which he thought to be equal to, and of the ſame Nature with him?

Now to return to the Text we examine, let us ſay that they are three Angels in the *literal* Senſe; and that in the two other Senſes, it is *he who is* with his two Powers: But we muſt take heed of a double meaning in the ſecond Senſe, *viz.* that of the *Allegory*, *he who is with his two Powers*, denotes *God himſelf with his ſundry Operations*: whereas in the third Senſe, which is the *Oeconomical* one, the ſame Terms ſignify only *him who bears the Name of God with two other Angels, that ſerve him as Miniſters.* Thus you ſee the three Interpretations of *Philo* explain'd, the which it ſeems Mr. *Le Clerc* underſtood not. The firſt hath nothing that is *Platonical*, but is purely an Hiſtorical Senſe, *viz.* that three Angels in a Human Shape preſented themſelves to *Abraham*. The third hath nothing of *Platoniſm* neither, it is a *Theological* Senſe, to wit, the Senſe of all the *Jews*, and of all the Chriſtians, who underſtand the antient Diſpenſation. The 2d that remains, is not *Platonical* neither, if you take it with *Philo*, *allegorically*; that is, in an arbitrary Senſe, wherein the Letter of the Scripture is rais'd to Speculations and Ideas, that have no Foundation, or any reality in the Text. This laſt Interpretation of *Philo* would be truly *Platonical*, if he underſtood by the Three he ſpeaks of, either three *Hypoſtaſes*, or three diſtinct *Perſons*.

Persons, whereas he understands there but one only *Person* under three different respects, to wit, God consider'd either in himself, *he who is*; or in relation to us, inasmuch as he is our *Creator* and our *King*. This is what *Philo* calls *the Jehova with his two Powers*. One might indeed call this a *Platonical* Sense, provided *Plato* be understood as he ought, who under the *Allegory* of three Hypostases, design'd to inform us of nothing else, but only an All-good, All-wise, and All-powerful God, both in the Creation and the Government of the World. But then the Authority of *Plato* and *Philo*, who are quoted as having spoken of *three Distinctions* in the Deity, will become useless to the Trinitarians.

CHAP. XI.

That all those commonly call'd Hereticks *did believe a pre-existent* Word, *and in what sense.*

I Told you that the *Unitarians* quarrel not at all with the allegorical Sense of *Philo*, who doth not suppose three *Hypostases*, but only three Divine *Relations*, or God with his two *Powers*. *Ruarus* in his Epistles (*Part* 1. *p.* 296.) owns a pre-existent λόγος, which created the World, and dwelt in J. C. "The Fathers, saith he, who liv'd before the "Council of *Nice*, held a pre-existent "λόγος; but notwithstanding, they "believ'd not that this λόγος was the "Supreme God and Creator of the "World, but a Spirit flowing from him, "when he went about to create the "World, and which subsisted in him "till then.——We differ not much from "this Opinion, for we willingly own, "that an extraordinary Spirit of God "did inseparably unite it self to J. C. "from the very moment of his Conception, and was, as it were, incorporated with him: A Spirit, say I, "which existed in God before his Conception, and even from Eternity. "Nay, if any one will have it by any "means, that this Spirit, by whom J. C. "perform'd the Work of the New Creation, is the same that created this Universe; we shall not contest his Opinion.

He is in the right: For where is that Unitarian, I pray you, who owns not an *internal Word*, and an *eternal Reason*, which always subsisted in God, and which is God himself (as Mr. *Le Clerc* expresseth it in his Paraphrase) which also dwelt in J. C? I shall not except even the *Alogi*, so call'd, because they rejected the *Platonick Word*, subsisting out of God himself, and having an *Hypostasis* distinct from that of the Father: But they never denied, that, in the Hypostasis of the Father, there was not a *Reason*, a *Word*, or *Operation*, that created the World, and which insinuated it self into the Flesh of J. C. It was indeed said of them, that they absolutely rejected the *Word*, but it was with the same Justice and Candor, as some Moderns assert, that the *Divine Grace* is denied, when it is only their *irresistible Grace* that is rejected, which they have been pleas'd to conceit as such. *Sandius*, who maintain'd a *Word brought forth*, and stood for the *Hypostases*, yet owns (*Nucl. Hist. Eccl. lib.* 1.) that *Marcellus*, *Photinus*, *Sabellius*, *Paul* of *Samosata*, and even *Ebion*, who believ'd only an *Hypostasis* of the Father, held, notwithstanding, that in that *Hypostasis* alone, there were two *Energies*, of

or Divine *Operations*, to wit, the *Word*, and the *Holy Spirit*; and that by these two *Operations*, God created the World, and manifested himself in J. C. *Petavius* acknowledges the same (*De Trinit. lib.* 1. *c.* 13.) as to *Paul* of *Samosata* and *Marcellus*. Dr. *Pearson* agrees with him, "That the last (*Vind. Ignat. Par.* 2. *c.* 3.) "believ'd an existent *Word* in the *Hypo-* "*stasis* of the Father, and which came "forth thence as a single *Operation* to "create the Universe. Dr. *Bull* (*Judic. Eccles. &c. p.* 67.) recounting the Opinion of *Paul* of *Samosata*, attributes to him constantly, "that he believ'd an effi-"cacious *Word* descended from Heaven "on J. C. And by the Word, saith he, "*Paul* did not intend that *Hypostasis*, "which we call the *Son of God*, but "a *Power*, and a Divine Virtue, which "form'd him in the Virgin, and which "was closely united to him to work the "Miracles he did. Neither can it be denied that this was the Opinion of *Beryllus*. Those Expressions of *Eusebius*, that have given so much trouble to the Learned, are not difficult to be understood, provided you supply them with some Particle, and add a word or two, as you must sometimes in all other Authors. In my opinion *Eusebius* intends nothing else (*Lib.* 6. *c.* 33.) but that this Bishop maintain'd that the Man J. C. did not pre-exist in another *Essence*, or another Nature, that was proper to him, before he liv'd among Men: And consequently that the Deity which dwelt since he liv'd among Men, was not an *Hypostasis* of his own, but the Divinity and Virtue of the Father. This is a right Notion; the *Word* is nothing else but a Divine Power distinct from the *Son*, and a Heavenly *Wisdom* descended on J. C. *Beryllus*, *Paul*, and *Marcellus* had it perhaps from *Ignatius*, who calls J. C. (*Epist. ad Magnes.*) *The Eternal Word that came not forth out of silence*; i. e. that he was not a *Word brought forth* and *begotten* with its proper *Hypostasis*, but the *Operation* and the essential *Virtue* of God manifesting himself outwardly. For I frankly agree, that this Passage of *Ignatius*, which hath given so much trouble to the Abettors of his Epistles, is not intended against *Valentine*; but I say, it attacks those *Platonick* Doctors, who asserted a *Generation* of the *Word* a little before the Beginning of the World, and who believ'd that it was *brought forth*, and consequently *proceeded out of Silence*. This was the Opinion of *Tertullian*, and many of the Fathers who preceded him, that the *Word that was brought forth*, which they believ'd to be the only that was *begotten*, and the only one that might be call'd the *Son*, did come forth in time of another *mute Word*, which they call'd *Reason* or *Wisdom* eternal.

Tertullian teacheth us positively (*adv. Prax.*) "that before the *Word that was* "*brought forth*, came out of the *Wisdom*, "or the Divine Reason, God had it in "himself, in his Thought, as a *silent* "*Word*; *habebat intra semetipsum tacitè* "*cogitando*. You cannot express more clearly, that the *Word brought forth* came out of Silence. This Opinion, no doubt, began to glide in at the time of *Ignatius*, who laughs at it, and refutes it, rejecting this *Word brought forth*, and *proceeding* out of Silence, which receiv'd its *Hypostasis* a little before the Creation, as being a *Word* merely *Platonick*; and he admits no other *Word* to be real, but that essential Virtue, which was eternally in God, which is God himself, which created the World, and was as it were incorporated in J. C. And this *Ignatius*'s way of speaking, that J. C. is the *eternal Word*, is grounded on the Words of St. *John*, that the *Word was made Flesh*; that is to say, that the same Virtue which created the World is become the proper Virtue of J. C. in such a manner, that you may say rightly, that J. C. made the Ages by his Power, and consequently by himself; for that which is done by my Power, is done by myself. When therefore the Apostles say, *that all things were made by J. C.* or by the *Son*, their meaning

meaning is no other, but that they were made by the immense Power of the Father, which was in J.C. he becoming that *Power*, that *Spirit*, that *Wisdom* of the *Father*, because all the Miracles effected by that Power, are said to be done by J. C. in whom it resided. In this sense *Simon Magus* call'd himself, *the great Power of God*, and boasted that he had made the Ages; not that he believ'd himself, as the Antients would have it, to be a Divine *Hypostasis*, sometimes the *Father*, sometimes the *Son*, and sometimes the *Holy Ghost*: He was not so extravagant, but only aping J.C. design'd to say, that the Divine *Power*, which actuated him, was the *Power* of the *Father*, the *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, the same *Power* that created the World. J. C. is in the same sense call'd the *Power of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24.

We may enforce the Explication we have given of *Ignatius* his Words, by the manner how *Irenæus* disputes against the *Valentinians* (*Lib.* 2. *c.* 47. *& seq.*) "It "is true, saith he, that in regard to "Man, he is sometimes silent, some- "times speaks; sometimes he takes his "rest, and sometimes acts: But it is "not so with God, who being all Un- "derstanding, all Reason, all Spirit, is "not liable to such like Changes. Mean- ing, that God is always a *Reason*, an *inte nal Word*, but never a *Word brought forth*, as he explains himself afterwards, saying, "That God being all *Reason*, "*thinking* in him is *speaking*, and *speak-* "*ing* nothing else but *thinking*: For his "*Thought* is his *Speech*, and his *Speech* "is his *Understanding*; and this *Under-* "*standing*, which comprehends all things, "is the Father himself. Further, to make us the better comprehend, that he speaks thus against the *Word brought forth*, or begotten, he accosts the *Valentinians* with this smart Raillery. The *Valenti- nians*, saith he, speak of the *bringing forth* and *Generation* of the Son, as if they had assisted the *Father* at his Birth. I shall leave you to consider, whether this Raillery spares our Scholasticks. He that would be at the pains about it, needs only make a Parallel of their System con- cerning the *Generation* of the *Son*, with that of the *Valentinians*, and he might soon see whether those Hereticks only were ridiculous herein.

CHAP. XII.

Plato *speaks but ænigmatically. His* Word *is not that of St.* John. *Several Systems of the* Platonists *explain'd.*

I Could produce many more *Platonists*, but to be brief, I come now to *Plato* himself. See then what *Clement* of *Alexandria* saith of him (*Strom. lib.* 5. *p.* 592. of the *Paris* Edition.) "When "*Plato* saith, that it is difficult to find "the Father of the Universe, he shews "by this, not only that the World was "*generated*, but also that it was *generated* "as his *Son*. *Plato* himself gives us the Substance of his System in his 2*d* Letter to *Dionysius*, with this caution, that it is alto- gether *ænigmatical*. "All things, says he, "are round about the *King* of the Uni- "verse, the things of the second Order are "about the *Second*, and the things of the "third Order are about the *Third*. Which is thus interpreted by *Marsilius Ficinus*. "The Ideas are about the *Good*, "the *Angelic Spirits* about the *Reason*, "and the *Forms* about the *Soul of the* "*World*. He adds, that *Plato* calls them "*three Principles*, not because they are "equally such, but inasmuch as they are "subor-

" ſubordinate the one to the other. " The *Good* is ſuch of *himſelf*; the " *Reaſon* inaſmuch as it is the *neareſt to* " *God*, and the Soul inaſmuch as it is " *produced by the firſt and ſecond God.* Now this Order, whatever it be, hath no relation at all to an *inviſible Trinity*, but is manifeſtly refer'd to the World and Creation, ſeeing the *Second* and the *Third God* are nothing elſe but the *Underſtanding*, and the *efficacious Will* of the ſupreme God; the one being filled with the *Ideas* of all Beings, and the other producing their different *Forms*. Thus you have the Riddle unfolded. I am not ignorant that *Clemens Alexandr.* pretends in the ſame Book I have quoted, that theſe Words of *Plato* mean nothing elſe but the *Chriſtian Platonic* Trinity (if I may expreſs my ſelf thus) but without any ground, as is evident by the Commentary of *Ficinus*. *Clement* endeavours to ſhew in this whole Book, that there is no Tenent in the whole Chriſtian Religion, but what is found in *Plato* and the other Philoſophers. Now ſeeing the Doctrine about the λόγος was the *Darling* of *Plato*, we need not wonder if the *Platonic* Fathers ſearch'd for all the poſſible Reſemblances between the *Second God* of *Plato*, and the *only Son of God*, on whoſe behalf and to this purpoſe, they imagin'd a *Generation* and Pre-exiſtence before Time was; having chang'd all the Goſpel matters of Fact concerning the miraculous Birth of our *Saviour*, into vain and empty Contemplations, which ſuppos'd in him another diſtinct Nature, from that which he received from the Holy Ghoſt and the Virgin. To conclude, whoever inſiſts, as it is uſual, on the ſeeming Reſemblance found between the *Word* of St. *John*, and that of the Divine *Plato*, ſeems willing to deceive himſelf; ſeeing the moſt able Criticks have own'd already, that there is no Reſemblance at all between theſe two *Words*.

Deſiderius Heraldus, as he is quoted by Monſ. *Le Clerc*, (*Biblioth. Univ. Tom. VI. p.24.*) remarks judiciouſly: " That " the Chriſtians of that Time ſtrain'd " to their Advantage, all the Actions, " Words and Writings of the Pagans, " which they often interpreted con- " trary to the true Meaning of the " latter. I ſhall now quote *Caſaubon*, who is not at all ſuſpected in this Affair. This Critick having related a Paſſage of *Cyril* againſt *Julian*, where this Father pretends that *Plato*, aſcribing the Creation of the World to the *Word*, ſpeaks the ſame with St. *John*; that Critick declares that himſelf is not at all of that Opinion: " You have here the Word, " ſaith he (*Exercit. in Baron. pag. 5.*) " by the which *Plato* aſſures the viſible " World was made. He indeed ſeems " to ſay what St. *John* did, which is " what *Cyril* pretends to: but if we " take a nearer view of this Affair, this " *Word*, or this *Reaſon*, as *Plato* would " have it, which the ſupreme God em- " ployed in the Creation of the World, " is viſibly and wholly different from " the *Word Jeſus Chriſt*, whereof St. " *John* ſpeaks; which *Word* is unknown " to thoſe, to whom the Revelation is " known. There are found many ſuch " like Expreſſions in the Fathers, where " the Ambiguity of the Words may de- " ceive thoſe, who do not examine " them with a requiſite Attention.

See here in brief what may be gathered from the *Platoniſts* Writings of the Platonic Philoſophers.

Theſe Philoſophers conſidering the *Trinity*, always with reſpect to the Creation of the World, built three Syſtems thereon. We ſhall name the firſt a *Theologic Syſtem*, which puts down the ſupreme Being for the *firſt God*, the intelligible and Ideal World for the *ſecond*, and the ſenſible World for the *third*: The firſt is the Father, becauſe he is the Underſtanding generating the Ideas; the other is the Son, the *internal Word* or the *Thought* of the *Father*, becauſe he is immediately generated, and ſub-

sists always in the Ideas of the *Father*: the last is the *Spirit* and *Soul*, or the Creature proceeding from the other two, because it receives the *Form* from the *Idea*, but its Life and its Motion from the first Author of all things. I shall name the second System of the *Platonists* the *Allegoric System*, which considers a Trinity of Properties in the *Second* God or the *Word*, in relation to the Creation; meaning by the *Divine Word* nothing else but the infinite *Goodness*, the admirable *Wisdom*, and the immense *Power*, which have form'd the Universe, as we have observed it above in a Passage of *Cleinens*. Hence it appears on what account they called it the *Maker* and Creator of all things. Lastly, we will name the third the *Physical System*, which considers in relation to the World an *efficient Cause*, *viz.* a Creator and a Father, a *Matter* subsisting from all Eternity in this first Author, which proceeded from him, by the way of *Prolation* or *Emanation*, and a *Form* produced, resulting from the other two, both from the *Matter* and the *first Cause*. The one is the *internal Word*, the other the *Word brought forth*, and the third is the *animated World*. These three Systems (and perhaps many others, that may be found in the allegorizing Platonists pregnant with such like Methods) are the Cause of *Plato*'s Doctrine being so confus'd, and difficult to be penetrated. Therefore Mr. *le Clerc* was in the right, when he says (*Biblioth. univ. Tom. X. p. 396.*) "That there is a great deal of Confu-"sion in the *Platonists* System, that "they have even contradicted them-"selves, not having a clear and distinct "Idea of what they would say. We may affirm the same of the antient Fa-thers who follow'd this Philosophy, in relation to the *Word*. But he did not observe that the Confusion remarkable herein, proceeds not only from the Di-versity of their Systems, but also for want of a good distinction between the *subtil Platonism* (for so I shall call it) which treated allegorically of the *Good-ness*, *Wisdom* and *Power* of God, under a Figure of *three Gods* who created the World; and the *gross Platonism*, which perceiving not the subtil part of this Allegory, and following the Letter, made three Hypostases of these three *Powers*. The first Method being allego-ric and arbitrary, might (without con-tradicting it self) change the Name, Or-der and Number, *&c.* of the Figures it made use of, to express always the same thing. This was an ingenious Invention, that varied its Representati-ons and Resemblances, tho it continued the same at the bottom. But the second Method, fix'd on the Number Three, which were always reckoned in the same Order, and had almost always the same Names given them, could not be liable to the same Confusion, especially among Christians, who applied it constantly to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Be-sides, they could explain themselves clearly in this last Method, and speak of it distinctly; whereas the other, in its very rise, was a politick Method prudent-tially invented, and which was under-stood either all or not at all, because it kept secret and allegorical.

Furthermore, the same distinction of *gross* and *subtil Platonism*, ought to take place in reference to the other two Systems, *viz.* in relation to the *Creator*, *Matter* and *Form*; and with respect to the *Father*, the *intelligible World*, and the *sensible* World. If you distinguish not well between the *Allegory* and the *Letter*, nothing will prove more intri-cate or unintelligible. Lastly, the prin-cipal Cause of this Confusion is, these two Methods being so often inter-mix'd; for if you mind it, the Fathers sometime philosophizing according to the *spurious Platonism*, insist rigidly on the sense of the three *Hypostases*: and sometimes treading in the Footsteps of the true and antient Platonism, do only allegorize, and by their *Emanations* seem rather to mean the *Powers* of the su-preme

preme Being, than *Spirits* subsisting. Sometimes nothing will serve their turn, but *Subsistences*, *Substances*, a true *Generation*, and a real *Procession*: At other times 'tis a quite different thing, they mean only the Powers and different *Oeconomies* of God, manifesting himself in the Creation of the World; to which they seem to give improperly the Name of a *generated Son* and *Wisdom brought forth*; which doubtless is the Cause why so much Sabellianism overspreads their Writings. We need not wonder henceforth, if their *Trinity* is sometimes so inconsistent with the *Unity* of God, this proceeds from their gross *Platonism*: Whereas in other Places, their Three Principles suffer the *Unity* to remain intire, which proceeds from their refin'd *Platonism*.

CHAP. XIII.

The Christians have contriv'd a twofold Word, *grounded upon the two* Words *of* Plato. *They meant only by Generation the Prolation of the second Word, which happened a little before the Creation of the World.*

SOCRATES reduc'd Philosophy to *Morality*; his Disciple *Plato* advanced it further, even to *Theology*, by making three *Persons*, or three Divine Hypostases of the three Divine *Properties*, by whose concurrence the World was created, or rather by conceiving a Creator infinitely *Good*, with an *Understanding*, drawing the Plan of the World, and an Energy that performs it. These Theologic Philosophers, allegorizing after their wonted manner, changed the intelligible World into the Word, and the sensible World into a Son. The one is the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, the other the λόγος προφορικὸς. The Fathers in like manner distinguish'd the two *Words*, whereof the one is *internal*, the other *brought forth*; and consider'd only the second as a *Son*, because properly speaking, they called Generation only that which was perform'd at the beginning of the World. They say, "When God "will'd to create the World, *he brought* "*forth or generated the Word.* May you not easily perceive, that such Modes of Speech owe their rise to the *Mystic Philosophy*, which consider'd the whole World as the Son of God, and as a *Son* generated by his *Word* or Command? Yes, these Turns of Expression owe their birth to some Poetical ones of the Heathens, like those of *Orpheus* related by *Justin* (*in Protrep. ad Gentil.*) "I swear, saith the "Poet, by that Voice which the Hea-"venly Father uttered, when he form-"ed the whole Creation. Then it was, according to *Justin*, that God *generated* his *Word*, because he brought it forth in order to create the World.

All this is well meant, and grounded upon the Words of *Moses*. The only difference I remark in the System about these two *Words* is; seeing Allegory is arbitrary, some have fix'd it on the *sensible World*, which they made to be the *Son* of *God*, as many of the Philosophers we quoted have done; because they consider'd it as the *Production* of the Divine *Speech* or *Power*: but others fixed their Allegory upon the *intelligible* or *Ideal World*, even on the *Speech* it self as *thrust* forth, which they considered as a Production of the *Divine Understanding*.

derſtanding. This laſt Syſtem was followed by the Chriſtians, when they perſonalized either the *Word brought forth*, as the firſt Fathers and the *Arians*, or the *Internal* and *Mental Word*, as the Fathers of the Council of *Nice* and the *Athanaſians* did.

Dr. *Bull* being forc'd to own this Truth, pretends to clear the difficulty, by diſtinguiſhing a twofold *Generation* of the *Word*, the one *Eternal* and the other *Temporal*; and maintaining that the Fathers conſider'd the firſt as *Real*, the ſecond as *Metaphorical*; but juſt the contrary hereof is true. *Theophilus* of *Antioch* diſtinguiſheth carefully the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, which is the *Thought* of God, from the λόγος προφορικός, which is the *Word generated*. *Athenagoras* and *Tatian* tell us of a Son, who was in God, in *Idea* and *potentially* before he actually exiſted as a *Perſon*. *Tertullian* ſaith: "There was a time when the "*Son* was not a *Son*, and that the *Fa*"*ther* was not always a *Father*; that the "Word which he diſtinguiſheth from "*Reaſon*, *was not from the beginning*. *Novatian* declares expreſly (*chap.* 31.) "that the *Proceſſion* of the Son which "was done when the Father willed it; that is to ſay, when he reſolved to create the World: "That this *Prolation*, "ſay I, made the Son a ſecond *Perſon*. *Origen* and *Clement* make a difference between the *Word which was God*, and the *Word which was made Fleſh*, meaning that the former was the *internal Word*, which is the Divine *Underſtanding* and God himſelf; and by the latter the *Word brought forth*, which is only an Emanation from the former. *Prudentius* calls J. C. *Verbigena*, *begotten of the Word*; where you may ſee manifeſtly the two *Words*, the one *generating*, and the other *generated*; the one being the eſſential *Wiſdom* of God, the other is its *Production*: And the firſt *Word* is ſo far from being the *Son*, that *Prudentius* conſiders it as the *Father*. Laſtly, not to be tedious, *Marius Victorinus* makes ſo great a difference between the *Word ſpeaking*, and the Word *ſilent*, that he calls the former the Son and the latter the Father.

All theſe Fathers generally tell us, that before the *Word* was *generated*, it was in the *Heart* of *God*, in the *Womb* of his *Underſtanding*, in his *Bowels*, whence it came forth as it were from its *Seed* and *Bud*. Either all theſe Terms mean nothing, or they denote that the Son did not then exiſt, otherwiſe than in the *Deſign* and *Intent* of the *Father*; that he came forth thence, when by the virtue of the Divine *Prolation*, he did receive a real Exiſtence. Now it is not the firſt Exiſtence but the ſecond, which the Fathers conſtantly and properly call the *Generation* of the Son, or in other words the *perfect Generation*, i. e. the real and actual Generation. Monſ. *Du Pin* (*Bibl. Tom.* 1. at the Word *Theophilus*) ſaith, "That the Fathers "affirm the *Logos* to be Eternal, and "that it was in God from all Eternity, "as his *Counſel*, his *Wiſdom*, and his "*Word*. But they ſay the ſame *Word* which was in God, did after ſome manner come out of God, when God reſolved to create the World, becauſe he then began to make uſe of that Word in order to act outwardly: This is what they term to be the *Proceſſion*, *Prolation*, and even the *Generation* of the *Word*. This hinders not indeed the Word's having been from all Eternity, nor its eternal *Generation* of the Father, as we conceive the manner thereof, *but this is not what they call Generation*. The ſame Author owns in his Notes upon the Article of *Tertullian*, that this Father means not *Generation* to be the eternal *Proceſſion* of the *Son*, but only a certain *Prolation* or outward *Emiſſion*, conceiv'd by him to have been at the Creation of the World, becauſe God both created and governs it by the *Word*. He ſaith further, we need not wonder, that he ſhould tell us in his Book againſt *Hermogenes*, that there was a time when the

the *Father* was not *Father*, and that the *Son* began to be *Son*, because he believ'd that the *Son* had neither that Quality nor Name, but only when the Word was created.

Monſ. *Jurieu* expreſſeth himſelf as fully in his ſixth Paſtoral Letter of the third Year, attributing this Sentiment to all the *Antenicene* Fathers, *viz.* that the *Word* had not its perfect *Birth* before the World's beginning; *i.e.* according to Mr. *Jurieu*, the *Word* is not eternal as it is a *Son*, but only was hid in the *Boſom of his Word* as Wiſdom; and that he was as it were produc'd, and *became a diſtinct Perſon* from that of the Father, a little before the Creation. You muſt be wilfully blind, if you perceive not from what ſource this *Theology of the Word* doth ſpring. As it is certain that the Heathens ever philoſophiz'd of their Gods, but relatively to the Origin of this Univerſe, and have always join'd *Theogony* with their *Coſmogony*: So likewiſe theſe *Platonizing* Chriſtians followed the Steps of this Pagan Philoſophy; their Creation of the World always accompanying the *Prolation of the Word*, or the *Generation of the Son*. This is noted by the ſame Monſ. *Jurieu* in the aforemention'd Paſſage, when he ſpeaks of *Athenagoras* and *Tertullian*. " They " believed, ſaith he, that the *Wiſdom*, " which was not the Son of God at " firſt, but only in a *Bud* or *Seed*, hav- " ing ſpread it ſelf over the *Chaos*, did " not only generate the Creatures, but " did alſo as it were by the ſame Effuſi- " on, give a *perfect* exiſtence to the " *Word*, or to the *ſecond Perſon* of the " Deity. This indeed may be ſaid to philoſophize like Heathens. May it not be ſaid, that the *Wiſdom* and the *Chaos* were the *Father* and *Mother*, whoſe Children are the *Word* and the *Creatures*? But this is not all, they bring them in by Couples like the *Æons* of *Valentine*; ſo true it is that the Chriſtians would not divide, what the Philoſophers and Poets had united ſo cloſely, *viz. Theogony* and *Coſmogony*.

I return to Dr. *Bull*, praying him to conſider whether a real Generation, and properly ſo called, can be expreſſed better than by ſaying that it is *perfect*, that it is *in Act*, that it gave a *perfect Exiſtence to the Word*, that it made the *Word* a *Perſon diſtinct from the Father*; and in ſhort, that it render'd the *Father* to be properly a *Father*, and the *Son* properly a *Son*. This the Fathers ſay of the *ſecond Generation*, which they conſider as the *only Generation* and *Birth* of the *Son*. On the contrary, can an *improper* and *Metaphoric Generation* be expreſſed better, than by ſaying, that the Son exiſted only in *Idea potentially*, in a *Bud*, in its *Seed*, in the *Heart*, in the *Womb* and the *Bowels* of God? For thus the Fathers talk of the *firſt Generation*, or to expreſs it better, of the *firſt Exiſtence* of the Son of God, which they ſcarce reckon to be a Generation. For can you, for example-ſake, call the *Metaphoric* Exiſtence of *Levi* in the Loins of his Father, when he was decimated in *Abraham*, a *Generation*? But the Fathers think thus of the firſt *Exiſtence*, whilſt they ſay that the Son exiſted then only in a *Bud* or *Seed*, and not, as Monſ. *Jurieu* pretends (*Tabl. du Socin. Let. 6. Art. 3.*) that he was contain'd in the Boſom of the Father, as a Child is in its Mother's Womb; as if the *Word* had need to form it ſelf by degrees in the *Bowels* of the Father, and wait its time, to wit, that of the Creation of the World, which ſhould likewiſe happen to be that of its Delivery. If Mr. *Jurieu* had underſtood the *Platonic* Philoſophy, he had taken care to avoid ſuch a ridiculous Thought.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

The immediate Generation of the Word.

THE antient Doctors followed *Plato*, and their meaning was, that the Divine Understanding is the Principle and *Bud*, where the Son existed from Eternity *as to his Essence*: all Essences being eternal in this respect, according to the *Platonists*, because they are the *Emanations* of the Substance of God, but particularly all *generated Spirits*; hence *Homousianism* takes its rise. The *Son* came forth out of this first source of all Essences, being the chiefest of them in God's Design. He came forth in Time *as to his Person*, to be the first Minister of the Father in the Creation of this Universe: This distinguisheth him from all the Creatures, the Birth of which is less noble, as not being *immediate*. Hereupon, if you had asked them the reason, why the *Word* alone, amongst all the *generated Spirits*, should be called the *Son*, or the *only Son*, they could not have alledged any other than the Privilege of being *generated immediately* (ἀμέσως) of the Father; whereas the other Spirits were so, by the means of a second God and Minister. The Author of the *Apostolic Constitutions* speaks thus (*Lib.* 8. *cap.* 12.) "The Father, "who alone is above all Generation and "Beginning, having created all things "by his only Son, has immediately *ge-* "*nerated* (without any Intermedium) "that his only Son by his *Will*, by his "*Power* and *Goodness*: He generated "him before all the Æons, making use "of him afterwards to create even the "Æons, the Cherubims and Seraphims, "*&c.* According to him the Angels were form'd by the *Son*, but the Son was generated only by the *Will* and the *immediate Power* of God, which is his Prerogative.

You need not doubt that *Eusebius* intended the same thing, when he calls J. C. (*de Laud. Constan. cap.* 1.) *the most antient of all the Æons*, πάντων αἰώνων πρεσβύτατος. Other Fathers thought the same, whenever they made use of these Words of St. *John*, *In the beginning was the Word*; for they did not mean that by the *Beginning Eternity* ought to be understood, which this Word cannot denote, as *Maldonat.* confesseth ingenuously (*in Joan.* 1.1.) they only meant, that the *Word* was not created in the beginning of all things (when God created the Heavens and the Earth) after the manner of other Creatures, or that of the other *generated Spirits*, because *it had a Being then already*, the Father having begotten it before by an *immediate* Generation. For this Reason the Author of the *Recognitions* (*lib.* 3. *cap.* 11.) denies formally, that the *Holy Spirit* may be called *Son*, "because "there is, saith he, but one *ungenera-* "*ted*, and but one *generated*; it can- "not be said that the Holy Spirit is a "Son, having been made by another, "who was likewise made. *Eusebius* de- livers this Doctrine as a

* *Tradition of the Church* (*De Eccles. Theol. lib.* 3. *cap.* 6.) "The *Spi-* "*rit, the Paraclet*, saith "he, is neither *God* nor *Son*, because "he took not his Origin from the *Fa-* "*ther*, after the same manner as the "Son did, being of the Number of "those things that were made by the "*Son*, *for whom all things were made*;

* *Such is the Argument of that Chapter.*

"All

" All things, saith the Evangelist, con-
" sequently then the Holy Spirit also.
Origen's Doctrine is the source of all this, who maintains in his 1 *Tom.* upon St. *John*, that the Holy Spirit is a Creature of the Son, relying with *Eusebius* upon this Expression, that all things, not excepting the Holy Spirit, were made by the Son.

This Theology of the Antients touching the *immediate Generation of the Word*, at the time of the World's Creation, was follow'd by many other Doctors, even after the Council of *Nice*. *Marius Victorinus* is of this Number, who would have it in his first Book, that the *Generation* of the *Word* is only an *Effusion* and *Manifestation* of that Power which created the World, and which was hid in God before. You may join *Zeno* of *Verona* with him (*de æterna Filii Generatione, Serm.* 3.) who moreover explains this Generation, by referring it to the Creation of the World. " For, as he
" saith, it was then that the Word,
" which was as it were buried in the A-
" byss of the Divine Understanding (*in*
" *profundo sacræ Mentis, Serm.* 1.) was
" *thrust forth* and *begotten*. Would *Valentine* have expressed himself otherwise about his *Word*, which came forth out of the Understanding, than this Man doth of his, come out of the *Deep* and *Silence*? But we ought not to forget *Rupert*, who unfolds admirably this Philosophic *Cabala*, saying, " That the
" Father *actually* begot the Word,
" which contain'd *potentially* all things,
" when he created the Heavens and the
" Earth. Yes, he goes on, the Father
" thrust forth this *good Word* out of his
" Heart, and before the Morning-Star
" begot him out of his Bosom, *viz.* out
" of the Bottom of his Substance,
" when he said, *Let there be Light*. Nothing can be more like to *Origen*'s Expression, " That the Generation of the
" Light, is the *Generation* of the *Son*.
Mr. *Huet* excuseth *Origen*, alledging that he spoke allegorically: we do not doubt it, all this Theology is Allegorick. The *Word* or Command which God utter'd to the Creature, is the *Son* of God, but improperly so, and in the same sense, that my *Thought* or my *Speech* are the Sons of my Understanding, which both conceives and brings them forth: This is too evident, and for this Cause Dr. *Bull* had reason to retrench out of his Quotation (*Defen. Fidei Nic. p.* 396.) these last Words of *Rupert*'s Passage; " *That the Father begot the Son, when he*
" *said, Let there be Light.*

But *Lactantius* goes beyond all these Doctors I quoted; for he allows not to the Word so much as the Advantage of an immediate *Generation*, above the other *generated Spirits*: He finds no difference between them, but only in the different manner of their *Prolation*, and in the different Design God had in the begetting of them. " The Holy Scriptures
" teach us, saith he (*Lib.* 4. *c.* 8.)
" that the Son of God is the *Word of*
" *God*, even as also the other Angels are
" the Spirits of God. For the *Word* is
" a Spirit, which was brought forth
" with a significative Voice: But be-
" cause the *Spirit* (Breath) and *Speech*
" are thrust forth by different Organs,
" the Spirit proceeding out of the Nos-
" trils, and the Speech out of the Mouth,
" consequently there is a great diffe-
" rence between this *Son of God* and the
" other Angels (*cæteros Angelos*) these
" being come forth out of God as *si-*
" *lent* and *mute* Spirits, because they
" were not created to preach the Doc-
" trine of God, but only for the exe-
" cuting of his Orders. But the Son,
" notwithstanding he is a Spirit, yet he
" came forth of the Mouth of God
" with a Sound and a Voice, like unto
" Speech, because God was to make use
" of his Voice to instruct the People,
" &c. You see manifestly, how he confounds the Angel, who is called the Word, with the other Angels; that he makes them all to proceed out of God equally by an *immediate Prolation*; and

thus

that the only difference he makes here consists in this, that the common Angels proceeded out of the *Nostrils* of God as *mute* Spirits, design'd only to execute his Orders by Deeds; whereas this chief Angel whom he calls the *Son*, doth proceed out of the Mouth of God, as a vocal and sounding Speech, design'd to deliver his Oracles, and to reveal his Will.

Lastly, *Origen*, or some body else under his Name, goes beyond even *Lactantius* himself, in that he confounds the *Generation* of the *Word* with that of common Creatures (*Homil. 2. in diversos*) For tho on the one hand he seems to say, "That the Word was born before all "things, and that all things were made "by him; yet he advanceth at the same time, that these Words, *all things were made by him*, signify only, that at his being born of the Father, all things were likewise born together with him, the *Generation* of the *Word-God* being the same with the Creation of all things. And tho he saith, "That the Son is of "a different Substance from the Crea-"ture, that he hath the same Nature "with the Father, and that he had a "beginning before Time was: He seems to destroy all this, by adding, "That the Substance of the *Father* is "the Cause of the *Son's* Substance, and "that Jesus Christ intended so much "when he said, that his Father was "greater than he; which asserts evidently, that the Substance of the *Father* is greater than that of the *Son*: As also when he goes on, "To exist before "Time, is to exist not in Time, but "with Time. His Conclusion will tell us his Meaning: "We ought then, "saith he, to believe three things, the "Father bringing forth the Son begot-"ten, and the things that were made "by the *Word*; the Father speaks, the "Word is begotten, and all things are "made. Conformably to what he was saying, *viz.* that the Father bringeth forth the Word, that is to say, begetting his Wisdom, all things were then made. It is not difficult to sound the Depth of this Philosophy. The *Word* is of the same Substance with the *Father*, because it is the proper *Power* of the Father: but it is less than the Father, because it is only a Breath, an Emanation, and a Ray. The *Word* is before all things, because it was necessary that God should command before the Creature obeyed. But all things are born together with it, because God created the World, by bringing forth and begetting the *Word*. We should open our Eyes, and see the Cabala of the Creation of the World through all these mysterious Generations. So, as *Clement* of *Alexandria* expounds it in brief (*Strom. lib. 5.*) "The *Word*, saith he, "coming out of God did cause the Cre-"ation; that is, to speak plainly, God created the World by one single Word; and seeing this great Maker made no use of any other Instrument, hence it came to pass, no doubt, that this *Word* of his was called his Minister.

But let us return to *immediate Generation*. As the Philosophers understood by Wisdom, Σοφία, nothing else but the Universal Idea of the World, which they called the *first-born Son* of God, because it is the Plan of this sensible World: So the Fathers being enur'd to this way of philosophizing, conceiv'd also the Idea of the Messiah, to be the first Idea in the Spiritual World, and an Universal One, and to be the Source and Seed of all the other Ideas. In this sense *Tertullian* against *Hermogenes*, makes *Wisdom* to be more antient than the *Word*, meaning that this *Wisdom* did thrust the *Word* it self out of the Heart of God, and together all the various Forms of existing things. Which is a mere Allegory; the meaning of which is, that the *Word brought forth*, and all other things were made according to the *Plan* and *Idea* of the *internal Word*, which is the immediate Production of the Divine Understanding.

Hence

Hence it comes, that *Justin* in his second *Apology*, distinguisheth the Universal Reason (ὁ πάντα λόγος, or τὸ πάντῃ λόγῳ) or the Primitive Seed, which is nothing else but the Wisdom of God, from Reason which is in every Man, and which is only a Portion and Emanation of the Divine Word (σπέρμα καὶ μέρος τοῦ θείου λόγου.)

The Philosophers consider'd these Seeds (λόγοι σπερματικοὶ) 1. In God, and then they differ not from *Platonic* Ideas, which are not only the Forms of Creatures trac'd in the Divine Understanding, but also are the Causes and the Origin of all Productions. *Marcus Antoninus* made use of this Word in that sense, *lib.* 4. §. 10. 2. They considered these Seeds in things created, designing to denote by them their Essences and Forms, but especially that of Man, who is as it were a Portion of the Wisdom of God. This last is the sense of *Justin*. But they distinguish'd among these Primitive Seeds, the Idea of the Messiah, as an immediate one, and the first in the Divine Understanding, for the sake of which God trac'd and form'd all the rest. Hence arose that common Opinion, that God created the World for the Messiah. This Opinion, whether true or false, gave occasion to *Mahomet* to apply to himself this Prerogative of the Messiah, that God would not have created the Heaven and the Earth, had it not been for the Love he bare him (*apud Barthol. Edessen. in confut. Agaren.*)

Furthermore, if any will demand how it happened, that so many of the Disciples of *Plato*, both Christians and Pagans, did so grosly follow the Letter of his three Principles, made three *Hypostases* of them, and changed his *Cosmogony* into a mere *Theogony*: I answer, as Mons. *Le Clerc* doth concerning Idolatry (on *Exod.* 20. 4.) "It proceeded, "saith he, from the Craft of Priests; "who, in order to make Religion more "August, talk'd but very obscurely of "its Mysteries; whatever was clear "was not convenient for them, but e-"very thing must be concealed under "Symbols and Riddles: and seeing that "Symbolical Religion was purely arbi-"trary, it came to pass that the true "sense of those Symbols was effaced "out of the Minds of Men, nothing "remaining for the Vulgar, except "what made an Impression upon their "senses: So that they believed at last, "that the Deity it self dwelt under "those Figures. At first they design'd "to represent under the Symbolical Fi-"gure of an Ox, only a King devoted "to Husbandry; but at last they came "to believe, that the Soul it self of "that King deified did inhabit that "Ox.

No doubt but the Philosophers themselves were a part of the People. The shrewder of them having found the Truth, had some Reasons to cover it under Fictions, thereby to disguise it to others. *Plato* had his, as we have seen already. He having found the Father of the World, to be the most good, wise and powerful God, and having found it dangerous to speak of him according to Truth, he made three *Hypostases*, and three Gods of the three Attributes, which he conceived were in the Creator; and spake of them Majestically, under the Names of *Good*, *Reason*, and the *Soul of the World*, or under some other Fictions that vary the Terms, yet without altering the secret Doctrine contained in those Symbols. This Symbolic Theology being arbitrary, or rather a mere Fiction, the Sense tained under that Shell, dwindled away by little and little: The Letter remaining alone, they philosophized only on the indeterminate System of three *Hypostases*, *viz.* of a *First*, *Second* and *Third* God. The Christians especially were not wanting to make a noise about this Mystery, to render their Religion the more pompous. But after all, it was the gross *Platonism*,

niſm, that turned the Chriſtian Doctrines into a mere Paganiſm. Thus the beſt things degenerate, but it was not ſo from the Beginning.

CHAP. XV.

The Sentiment of the Moraliſts among the Jews, *concerning the* Wiſdom *or the* Word. *St.* John *hath imitated them.*

I Know it is pretended, that the *Jews* were not ignorant of the Myſtery of the *Platonic* λόγος; but in truth, there is too much Weakneſs, in what is alledged from the 8*th* of *Proverbs*, and ſome other Places in their moral Books. I am amazed to think, that any body ſhould not ſee this Chapter to be figurative, and that *Solomon* ſpeaks there of Wiſdom in general, ſuch as it is in God, or as he hath communicated it to Man: but eſpecially of that which ſhines forth, and is to be admired in the Creation of the World, as ſome of the Orthodox underſtood it in St. *Jerom*'s time (*Hieron. in cap.* 2. *Epheſ.*) Dr. *Patrick* now Biſhop of *Ely* doth freely own in his Paraphraſe on this Chapter, that *Solomon* ſpeaks here of nothing elſe but the wiſe Laws which God had given to the *Iſraelites*: " *Arg. ver.* 21, 22, *&c.* " ——This is expreſſed in ſuch mag- " nificent Language, that tho *Solomon* " I ſuppoſe thought of nothing but " the wiſe Directions God had given " them in his Word, revealed to them " by his Servant *Moſes* and the Pro- " phets; yet the antient Chriſtians " thought his Words might be better " applied to the Wiſdom revealed unto " us in the Goſpel by the Son of God " himſelf, the Eternal Word and Wiſ- " dom of the Father.

Could he have expreſſed himſelf more clearly, to give us to underſtand, that when the *Platonic* Fathers applied theſe lofty Expreſſions of *Solomon* to their *Eternal Word*, they did not, or could not do it, but by the way of an *Accommodation* or *Alluſion?* The ſame Biſhop, having related the Opinion of ſome Fathers a little lower, who apply the ſame Expreſſions of *Solomon* to the Man Jeſus Chriſt, afterwards goes on thus, *pag.* 63. " But this (ſaith he) " not being the ſenſe of the Words " which *Solomon* firſt intended, I ſhall " not build my Paraphraſe upon it, " but take *Wiſdom* here, as it ſignifies " in other Places of this Book, and hath " been hitherto deſcribed, whom *So-* " *lomon* now celebrates for her moſt ve- " nerable Antiquity, and introduces " like a moſt beautiful Perſon, no leſs " than a Queen, or rather ſome Di- " vine Being (infinitely to be preferred " before that baſe Strumpet, ſpoken of " in the foregoing Chapter.)

Indeed *Solomon* hath made her ſpeak, by introducing her as a Perſon, and exhorts young People to give ear to her: She ſpeaks of herſelf, that *God created* her, or that ſhe *comes to us from God*; that ſhe *was before the World was made*, becauſe God, who is the ſource of her and communicates her to Men, did make uſe of her in framing this Univerſe: Alſo that *Kings reign by her*, becauſe Prudence and good Counſels are the Soul of a good Government. Notwithſtanding this clear and natural ſenſe, Prejudice hath abuſed theſe Words to apply them to Jeſus Chriſt: but there are many other that cannot at all agree to him.

'Tis

'Tis true, that the *Platonick* Fathers are alledg'd here, who understood this Chapter literally of a *Personal Wisdom*. I own it, but the same Fathers have also, and that with no less Pomp, quoted that Passage of the 45*th* Psalm, *My Heart is inditing a good Matter*, (Word) to prove the Eternal Generation of J. C. We justly laugh now adays at so ridiculous an Interpretation, as well as of that, Psal. 110. *From the Womb of the Morning thou hast the Dew of thy Youth:* Which the antient Interpreters did endeavour to make subservient to the same purpose. Let us then, I pray, mistrust them as to this Text in the *Proverbs*, they having so grosly deceiv'd us in those two of the *Psalms*, which they made use of, for the same ends, as frequently and with as much Confidence.

But after all, tho their Testimonies should be produc'd in shoals, we can produce better Interpreters of *Prov.* 8. I mean, the Books of the Old Testament it self, the *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*, which tho they are Apocryphal, yet are of greater Authority than the Writings of the Fathers, who were the Disciples of *Plato*; the Authors of these two having probably known better the Mind of *Solomon*, and the Sentiments of the *Jews*. The Author of the *Wisdom* having made use of the same *Prosopopeia* with him in the *Proverbs*, calls Wisdom, *The Breath* (Spirit) *of the Power of God, a pure Stream flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, the Brightness of the everlasting Light, the unspotted Mirrour of the Power of God, the Image of his Goodness, and that she sits on the Throne of God.* He goes on like the Author of the *Proverbs*, that when God created the World, *Wisdom was with him, knew his Works, was present then, knoweth and understandeth all things.* But to let you see that he speaks only of a *Quality* or *Virtue*, he adds, *That he loved her, sought her out from his Youth, desired to have her for a Spouse, was a Lover of her Beauty.* He desires of God in his ardent Prayers, *to give her to him, to send her out of the Heavens to assist him, to teach him, that his Works might be acceptable: For*, saith he, *we hardly guess aright at things that are upon the Earth; but the things that are in Heaven who can search out, unless God gives Wisdom, and send his Holy Spirit from above?* (See Chap. 7, 8, & 9.) The same Author, speaking further of this Divine Perfection, saith, *That God made all things by his Word, form'd Man by his Wisdom*, Chap. 9. 1, 2. taking the *Word* and *Wisdom* for one and the same thing, *viz.* for that Power which created the World, and whereof Wisdom is but an Emanation. Can you imagine now this Author meant, that God did create the World by his *Son*, the second Person of the Trinity? Can such a Thought enter into a rational Creature?

Let us come now to the Author of the *Ecclesiasticus*, who expresseth better the Sense we ought to give to the Words of *Solomon*. He introduceth *Wisdom* speaking thus of her self: *I came out of the Mouth of the most High; he created me from the beginning, before the World.* Hitherto he seems to speak of a Person, but explains himself clearly, Ch. 24. Ver. 23. where he declares that he meant by this nothing else but the Law of *Moses*, which the *Jews* name *Wisdom* by way of Excellency. For having spoken of *Wisdom* under other Figures than that of a *Person*; I mean, under the Figure of a *Palm-tree*, an *Olive-tree*, a *Vine*, &c. he sums up what he had said in these words: *All these things are the Book of the Covenant of the most High, even the Law which* Moses *gave.* Can the Law given by *Moses* be call'd more expressly, not only an *Olive-tree*, or a *Vine*, but also the *Word which came out of the Mouth of the most High, and Wisdom which God created before the World?* Which are Expressions visibly figurative, the which under the Fiction of a Person, or the Figure of a Vine, represent the *Wisdom* of God to us, sometimes as revealing it self in the Creation of the

World, and again as repleniſhing Men with the Fruits of its Knowledg in the Diſpenſation of the Law. This kind of Fictions was familiar to the Moraliſt *Jews*, and to all the Oriental Philoſophers. You muſt be purblind, if you diſcern not immediately the Genius of that People, accuſtom'd to a figurative and parabolick Stile.

St. *John* imitates the Moraliſt *Jews*; and, according to the ſame Ideas, hath at one view repreſented to us the *Word* or *Wiſdom* of God manifeſting himſelf to Men, in two of the greateſt of his Diſpenſations, *viz.* in the *Old* and the *New Creation*. The Method is the ſame abſolutely; you need only put the *Goſpel*, or the *Author of the Goſpel*, inſtead of *Moſes* and the *Law*. You may really ſee him join theſe two things together, *viz. The Wiſdom of God reſiding in God himſelf, and preſiding at the Creation of the World; and the ſame Wiſdom deſcending upon J. C.* (in whom it was as it were incarnated) *and ordering the New World*. For if, according to the *Hebrews*, the Law was the *Wiſdom*, or the *Word*, or *Precept* by way of Excellency; much more doth this great Elogium belong to the Goſpel, namely, to be the *Word*, the *Wiſdom*, the *Truth*, the *Light*, and the *Life* by way of excellency. An Elogium conſequently belonging to J. C. who brought the *Word* and the *Life*, and was the great Teacher of *Truth*. Whatever the Scripture ſaith of the Firſt Creation, it ſaith the ſame in the ſame words of the New. All the *Encomiums* it gives to the Law, are applied more truly to the Goſpel; and laſtly, it ſaith nothing of God the Father, which it doth not accommodate to J. C. his Son, "who is the "*Vicarius* of the Father, as *Tertullian* calls "him, and who, ſaith he, makes us to "hear the Father in his Words, and "makes us ſee him in his Actions.

By this Rule you get the Key to all the Paſſages that ſeem to give the Son the ſame Names, Prerogatives, and the ſame Properties that God the Father hath; it is becauſe J. C. being the *Vicarius* of God, both the Words and Actions of the Father are attributed to him, by the virtue and upon the account of the *Repreſentation*, if I may thus expreſs my ſelf: For it is not, as I judg, by a mere *Accommodation*, but by a Subordination. Whatever is ſaid of the Father in an exact and rigid Senſe, may alſo be ſaid of the *Son*, as of a *Miniſter* and *Ambaſſador* that repreſents God; or to ſpeak better, that executes in a viſible manner what the Inviſible Father had already promis'd ſhould be done. Now leſt any one ſhould wrangle about this Title of *Ambaſſador*, I ſhall ſay more, namely, that there is more than a *Subordination*, becauſe we ſee in J. C. not only the Character of an Envoy, but likewiſe an *Abode*, and an immediate *Preſence* of the *Father's* Perſon. He that receives a Prophet, receives him who ſends the Prophet: therefore when J. C. came, veſted with the Authority of the Father, to accompliſh what God had promis'd ſhould be perform'd by the hands of the *Meſſiah*, God himſelf came in his Perſon, and we have receiv'd him in the Perſon of Chriſt. Hence it comes to paſs that J. C. is adorn'd with all the Characters of Glory and Power, which God attributes to himſelf, when he promiſeth that ſignal Deliverance by the Prophets, which he deſign'd to perform one day for the good of his Church. For this reaſon J. C. is call'd *Emmanuel*, God with us, which is a Symbolical Name, by which the Scripture denotes the *extraordinary* Preſence of God in the Meſſiah, and teaches us, that it is not ſo much the Man, but that it is the Sovereign and Inviſible God that acts. *I ſpeak not of my ſelf, I ſpeak only the things my Father taught me*; *I do nothing of my ſelf, but the Father that dwelleth in me he doth the Works*. Theſe, in one word, are the conſtant Expreſſions of J. C. he refers all the Authority of his Doctrine, and all the Glory of his Miracles, to the Father dwelling in him. This the *Jews* call'd

call'd *Shekinah*, the *Habitation of God*. Here is more than the Abode of God in the midſt of his People of old; this is a more ſenſible and magnificent Preſence; and to ſay all, 'tis God's dwelling in the Meſſiah, for *God was with him*, ſaith the Apoſtle.

You have need only of this Reflection to foil the ſtrongeſt Objection of the *Trinitarians*. They ſay, that the New Teſtament attributes conſtantly the ſame Properties and the ſame Perfections to the Son, and to the Holy Ghoſt, which the whole Scripture attributes to God the *Father*. Granted; What follows then? Neceſſarily one of theſe two things: Either you prove by it that there are three Gods, all which have the ſame Properties and equal Perfections; which is contradictory, and diſown'd even by thoſe that make this Objection: or you muſt acknowledg with us, that the Perfections of the Son are nothing elſe but the Perfections of the Father dwelling in him, and communicating himſelf to him. And the Holy Ghoſt is likewiſe only the *Virtue* and Power of God.

It is objected againſt this Doctrine I am now eſtabliſhing, that it is not cuſtomary to call the Ambaſſador by the Name of the King that ſends him. I will not enter now upon the Particulars of this Controverſy, nor even examine the Hiſtory of the Centurion, related by St. *Matthew*, Chap. 8. and by St. *Luke*, Chap. 7. which alone were ſufficient to decide it. It will be enough for me to remark at preſent, that tho this Cuſtom were not us'd by Men in their Tranſactions, yet it is inconteſtably ſo in God's Method. *Druſius (De Nomin. Tetragram. in Epiſt. ad Conrad. Vorſtium)* grants that it may be ſaid, the King doth what the Ambaſſador tranſacts in his Name; but he denies at the ſame time, that you may give to the Envoy the Name of the King that ſends him: And thereupon he will not receive, without ſome alloy, that Rule of the *Hebrews*, *That the Angel bears the Name of God who ſends him.* But with all the reſpect I owe this Great Man, I affirm that this Rule of the *Hebrews* is well grounded, it being taken from the Scripture it ſelf, where God declares that he will put his Name on the Angel whom he deſign'd to ſend. It is no matter then whether this be the Cuſtom of Kings, or no; ſeeing it is clear by this Place, that it is the Cuſtom of God to give *his Name* to his Envoys, at leaſt on ſome occaſions, and in extraordinary Caſes. And this Name, that I may take notice of it by the by, doth not denote only, that they may call themſelves, *the Lord*, *the Jehova*; but indeed they have all the Glory, the whole Authority, and all the Power; yet not abſolutely, but only in reference to that Commiſſion they are then honoured with: that is to ſay, they appear with as much Majeſty, they act with as much Authority and Power, as God would in the like caſe, were he pleas'd to act without a Medium, and by himſelf alone. And this is a great reaſon why God ſhould act thus; for ſeeing he could not manifeſt himſelf, if the Angels, by whom he was manifeſted, had never taken his Name upon them, it would have come to paſs that the *Jews*, having the knowledg only of Angels, would have totally forgotten God; whereas the Angels, by taking the Name of God upon them on ſome extraordinary occaſions, put that People from time to time in mind of him, by the Idea of his Preſence. After all, ſeeing God is inviſible by his Nature, and cannot manifeſt himſelf by himſelf; it follows then, that every time he manifeſts himſelf by an Angel, this Manifeſtation will not be regarded as an Appearance of an Angel, but as that of God himſelf, whom that Angel repreſents: and conſequently, it is not ſo much the Angel that bears the Name of *Jehova*, and is ador'd by Men, but God himſelf, that Angel being his Perſon and Preſence. This will be clear, if you regard theſe three Rules. 1. That according to the Oriental Idiom, the En-

Voys make their Masters speak always directly; as for example, instead of saying, *The Lord saith he is the Jehova*, they speak thus, *The Lord saith, I am the Jehova.* 2. They suppress often these Expressions, *The Lord saith*, and speak absolutely, without making use of that Preface, *I am the Jehova.* 3. That you ought to supply those Words, and read, *The Lord saith, I am the Jehova*; and then the Expression will become so natural, as not at all to be mysterious.

CHAP. XVI.

Where it is demonstrated that the Chaldee *Paraphrasts meant by the* Word *nothing else but an* Angel.

BEsides the Moralist *Jews*, the *Chaldee* Paraphrasts are also quoted, as if they had known the λόγος of *Plato*. The greatest part of these Paraphrases are stuff'd with Fables and Impieties, not to say, that they are of a late date, and unknown to the Antients who had any Skill in the Oriental Tongues. This is own'd by some of the modern Learned, as *Ribera*, *Isaac Vossius*, Father *Simon*, and others. However, an able Man hath already demonstrated with the utmost evidence (*Gul. Vorstius Discept. de Verbo Dei*) that these Paraphrasts never gave the Name of the *Word* to the *Messiah*, when they spake of him expressly; but always call'd him the *King Messiah*, and the *Messiah of the Lord*, or the *Messiah of Israel*, &c. So that St. *John* could not follow a Paraphrase then not extant, and which never gave the Title of *the Word* to the *Messiah of Israel*. But lest you should reply, that it is sufficient for this Apostle to have follow'd the Opinion of all the *Jews* of that time, you need but consider the Words of *Trypho* to *Justin*, to be assur'd of the contrary. "We wait "saith he, (speaking in the Name of his "Nation) for a Christ, a Man, born of "Men. It is true that this Expression, *the Word*, is very frequent in all these Paraphrases; but it is always attributed to God in the same sense with the *Latin*, *Numen Jovis*, *Numen Junonis*, for *Jupiter* and *Juno* themselves: Somewhat like our giving a King the Title of *His Majesty*, as, *his Majesty hath resolv'd, order'd, his Majesty said, or did*; instead of, *The King hath resolv'd, order'd, hath said or done.* In the like manner, when these Paraphrasts say, the *Word* did, commanded or declar'd any thing, 'tis the same with, *God* did, commanded or declar'd it. I do not say these are absolutely the same Expressions; however these Examples shew that there are in all Tongues some particular Modes of speaking, from the which no such consequence is to be drawn, as if every strange Word contain'd a great Mystery: We deceive our selves, this Mountain brings forth but a Mouse. Would you have me speak plainly? These Paraphrasts by the *Word* design'd only the *Angel* who bare the Name of God, and who spake in his stead; this Term being particularly appropriated to *Messengers* and *Interpreters*. We likewise see, that the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* did thus call (Chap. 18. 15.) the destroying Angel sent to kill the First-born of *Egypt*, because he was intrusted with the Command of God therein, and the Execution of it. *Thine Almighty Word*, saith he, *leapt down from Heaven*, &c. ὁ παντοδύναμός σου λόγος, &c. "This *Word*, saith *Maldonat* "(in

" (in *Joan.* 1. 1.) cannot at all be J. C. " of whom it cannot be said that he was " sent to perform the Office of an Exe- " cutioner. Thus those of *Lystra* call'd St. *Paul*, *Mercury*, or the Interpreter of *Barnabas*, whom they look'd upon as their *Jupiter*; and this because he, *Paul*, was the chief Speaker, *viz.* was the *Word* of *Barnabas*.

Hermes, which is the Name the *Greeks* give to *Mercury*, signifies an *Interpreter*, and they explain it often by λόγος, or the *Word*. " *Hermes*, saith the Author " of the Life of *Homer*, that is to say, " the *Word* (τοῦτ' ἐστὶ ὁ λόγος.) *Phurnutus* calls him an *Angel* or Messenger. *Heraclides Ponticus* gives the Name of *Angel* to *Iris*, and the Name of *Word* to *Mercury*: Sometimes he joins the Term *Word* with that of an *Interpreter*, calling *Mercury*, the *Word Interpreter* (ἑρμηνεὺς λόγος.) He also observes that *Iris* was thus call'd, because she brings word (as it were τὸν ἔιρουτα λόγον) and that *Hermes* was call'd so, because he is the Interpreter of the Gods (as it were τὸν ἑρμηνεύοντα.) At last he gives the reason why Wings are ascrib'd to him, because, saith he, there is nothing so swift as Speech; which made *Homer* say, that Words had Wings. Hence it comes, no doubt, that we give Wings to *Angels*, as well as to *Mercury*, because they are the *Messengers* and the *Interpreters* of God, λόγοι. Seeing then the Heathens talk'd thus of the Messengers of their Gods, and call'd them *Interpreters* and *Words*, I cannot discern any greater Mystery in the *Jewish* Paraphrasts, nor why they should not give the same Names to *Angels*, or other Messengers, that spake to them on the behalf of God.

Maldonat (in *Joan.* 1. 1.) did really observe well, that the Paraphrasts made use of this Term, when God was treated of, as conversing with and speaking to us, or coming to aid and succour us. This cannot be understood but of a Divine Manifestation by the Ministry of an Angel: neither would it have been surprizing, if what they said of the Angels they had said also of the *Messiah*, I mean in respect to his Commission, but not at all in relation to an invisible Nature. And then, if you would have it that St. *John* did imitate the *Jews*, as to the use of this Term, I shall agree with you, provided it be in the sense we have given, which is both plain, and agreeable to the Scripture.

We have observ'd already, *p.* 17, 18. that the Paraphrasts we speak of do not make use of this Term *Word*, but only in those places where the *Hebrew*, speaking of the Actions and Affections of God, expresseth them by the Terms of *Face*, *Eyes*, *Feet*, *Hands*, &c. which are corporeal Parts, and belonging only to Man. We observ'd at the same time, that these ways of speaking, which the *Hebrew* Text makes use of, were grounded upon this, that the Angel of God, who appear'd in God's Name, and had his Authority, did most commonly appear in the shape of a Man. The consequence I would draw from these two Remarks, is evident; and for this reason the Paraphrasts us'd this Term *Word*, only to denote the Divine Manifestation by Angels, under sensible Representations, but particularly those of a Human Voice and Shape. Their Testimony then is so far from favouring the Idea of a *Metaphysical Word*, that it serves on the contrary to confirm our *Hypothesis*; which is, that we ought to understand by the *Word*, a sensible Manifestation of God, either in a bright Cloud, or by a Heavenly Voice, or by a Human Shape.

It is true that some Controvertists object to us that Passage of the Paraphrase upon the Psalms, which is the worst of all, *viz.* that upon Psalm 110. *The Lord said to his Word.* I know not where they had it; for in the Original it is בְּמֵימְרֵיהּ, and the *Latin* Interpreter translates it very well, *in Verbo suo*, by, or in his *Word*, which is a mere *Hebraism*, instead of, God hath said. The *Jews* speak on this wise, saying, בִּרְבִּר, in or by his Word,

Word, that is to say, by the Command and Order of God. (See *Grotius* on *Joh.* 10. 35.) What is become now of the Mystery? Whence comes such a gross Mistake? The Learned *Hammond*, quoting this Paraphrase in *Luke* 1. 2. doth read it indeed לְמֵימְרֵה, *to his Word*, which is just what these Gentlemen would be at; but, if I am not mistaken, 'tis without any Authority: nor do I think, that if such a Reading were found in any Copy, either in Manuscript, or printed, it ought to be prefer'd to the common Reading, which is grounded, as we have shewn, on the Custom of the *Hebrews*. Besides, we may assert, without any fear of being in the wrong, that if there be any alteration in the original Term, it was not done to favour the Hereticks; we may presume the contrary. It is true indeed that Dr. *Bull*, in his *Defence of the Council of* Nice, quotes a Paraphrase we have not, to prove the false Reading. But it is likely that those who say they have seen it, saw but a *Latin* Translation, which hath it *Verbo suo* in the Ablative, as the Grammarians term it, *by his Word:* and it is the ambiguity of the *Latin* Construction, that impos'd on those who saw not the Original. So true it is that Error always begets a Mystery, and that even a Grammatical Ambiguity is capable to furnish us with high-flown and gorgeous ones. What makes me think so, is this, that I have observ'd the like ambiguity in the Author of the imperfect Work on St. *Matthew* (in *Mat.* 8. 8.) This Evangelist brings in the Centurion speaking, *Lord speak the Word* (εἰπὲ λόγῳ) And this Author, allegorizing no doubt on the Term *Word*, makes him deliver himself thus: "Lord, you have "need only to command one of your "Messengers, an Angel, λόγῳ, and my "Servant shall be healed; whereas he meant only that our Saviour should speak the Word: altho I would not condemn absolutely the Explication of this Author, because it is somewhat plausible, if we regard how the Centurion goes on: "For I am, saith he, a Man under Au- "thority, having Soldiers under me: "and I say unto this Man, Go, and he "goeth; and to another, Come, and "he cometh; and to my Servant, Do "this, and he doth it. These Expressions seem to insinuate indeed, that he intended J. C. should command some one of his Servants, as he commanded his own. Speak to an Angel, or to any one of your Disciples, to go and heal my Servant, and my Servant shall be healed. And in this sense an *Angel*, or an Apostle, would have been the *Word* of J. C. even as J. C. himself was the *Word* of the Father. If you take it thus, I shall grant with all my heart, that the Paraphrast in this place means the Messiah by that Term *Word*.

The Judgment of Father *Simon* upon these Paraphrases deserves your notice (*Hist. critic. du V. T. lib.* 2. *ch.* 18.) "It "is true, saith he, that *Galatine*, and "many other Divines after him, made "use of these Paraphrases to establish "some Articles of our Faith, in oppo- "sition to the *Jews*, principally those "relating to the *Messiah*: But altho these "Proofs seem conclusive as to the *Jews*, "because they are taken out of their "Books; yet I do not think it advan- "tageous to the Christian Religion to "have recourse to Books stuff'd with "Fables. ——— Besides, the Passages "we believe to favour our Religion, con- "sisting chiefly but in Allegories, it will "be easy for the *Jews* to evade them; "for we cannot prove the Truth of our "Mysteries invincibly by Allegories. But if, notwithstanding all these Discoveries, the Trinitarians will still insist upon these Paraphrasts to authorise their pretended Mystery, we shall be alarm'd so little at the advantage they pretend to get by them, that we shall over and above lend them this Passage of the *Targum* of *Jerusalem*, extremely fit to prove the Pre-existence of their *Word*. *Glassius* relates it (*Philol. p.* 22.) The Paraphrast expounding these Words, *Behold*, Adam

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is become as one of us, brings in the *Word* ſpeaking to his Father, *Papa, behold* Adam *whom you have created, who is your only Son on Earth, as I am your only Son in Heaven.* It ſeems as if the *Word* was pleas'd that he had a Brother and a Companion. Shall we never be aſham'd of theſe *Rabbinick* Frenzies, or rather of theſe *Platonick* Impoſtures?

CHAP. XVII.

Concerning the Method of the Sacred Writers, and ſome of their Diſciples, viz. Hermas, Barnabas, *&c. in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.*

THE Writers of the New Teſtament being *Jews* by Birth, did affect, according to the Genius of that People, an analogick Senſe and Accommodations, finding every where Relations between the Old and the New Teſtament. Every body knows how they have adapted one Hiſtory to another, one Event to another Event, and of what nature are their frequent Alluſions and Allegories. On this wiſe, to omit other Examples, what *Moſes* ſaith of the Word of God producing the Creature out of nothing, St. *John* accommodates to that Word of J. C. which forms Men anew, and manifeſts the Power of God, demonſtrating by Miracles that all Creatures obey him: J. C. being not ſo much the Interpreter of the Will of God, as the Inſtrument of his Power. You will find this Analogick Senſe may be obſerv'd in moſt of the Paſſages of the Old Teſtament, which the Apoſtles have applied to the New. *Beza* (on 2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) calls this Senſe *Anagogical*, that is to ſay, Spiritual, Sublime, Myſtical, and exalted above the pitch of the Letter. See *Scult.* (*Exerc. Evangel. lib.* 1. *cap.* 62.) where he ſpeaks at large of the manner how the Sayings of the Prophets are accompliſh'd analogically under the New Teſtament. " The Teſtimonies of the Old " Teſtament, ſaith he, are not always " alledg'd to confirm a thing, but to " illuſtrate it by an ingenious and well- " contriv'd Accommodation, which is " very familiar to the Holy Ghoſt. The *Therapeutes*, or *Jewiſh* Philoſophers of *Alexandria*, retain'd this way of interpreting, the more willingly, becauſe it was altogether conformable to the Method of the *Platoniſts*, among whom they liv'd. *Euſebius* relates (*Hiſt. Eccl. lib.* 2. *c.* 16.) " that they had the " merely Allegorical Commentaries of " the Antients; and that in expounding " the Scriptures they philoſophiz'd af- " ter the manner of their Predeceſſors, " that is to ſay, by the way of Figures " and Allegories, pretending that the " Letter is but a Shell wherein many " Myſteries are incloſ'd.

The moſt antient Fathers of the Church, *viz. Hermas* and *Barnabas*, did follow this Method of the *Jews*, ſearching for a Spiritual Meaning in the Facts and Rites of the Old Teſtament, in order to adapt them to the New; but yet not ſo as to bring in ſuch *Platonick* Ideas as obtain'd ſome time after in the Chriſtian Religion: The following Fathers having not only carry'd their Allegories too far, and exceeded the antient manner of affecting myſtical Senſes, but alſo ſpoil'd this Method by joining groſs *Platoniſm* with it, which perſonaliz'd every thing, and turn'd the Anagogick into an Hiſtorical and Literal Senſe.

Let us begin with *Barnabas*. The Sacred Writers having said that J. C. was the *Rock of the Desert*, the *Passover*, *Propitiation*, &c. in like manner *Barnabas*, accustom'd to the Method his Nation follow'd ever since the Captivity, accommodates to J. C. many Passages of the Old Testament, which had their mystick and spiritual Truth in him. According to this way of interpreting, the *Rock* was J. C. intelligibly; *David* was J. C. analogically. The Antients tempted J. C. because they tempted *Moses*, or the Angel, who were the Types of the Messiah: So that it might safely be said, that Christ was an *intelligible Moses*, an *intelligible David*, or *Rock*; and consequently an *intelligible Word*, in the same sense that *Hesychius* calls the Blood of the Eucharist, *intelligible Blood*; that is to say, a mystical Blood, which is conceiv'd such only by our Thought and Mind, not being really so, and in the very Letter. For who can so much as doubt that the *Word* is J. C. or that J. C. is the *Word*, by the which God created the World, in the same sense as he is the *Passover*, or the *Rock* of the Desert? That is to say, there is found in him mystically that Divine Efficacy, or that powerful Word, which speaks, which commands, and the Creature immediately obeys its Orders. God said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*: J. C. said, *Let this blind Man receive his Sight*, and there was Light, the *blind Man saw it*; he perform'd his Miracles by a Word only. Can you accommodate better the Old Creation to the New? And that so much the more, because the same *Word* which created the World, acted in the Flesh of J. C. the which it not only inhabited, having descended on it in the shape of a Dove, but into which it had likewise insinuated it self as the principle of his Conception and Birth. But that you may not believe me upon my bare word, I will prove my Hypothesis by *Barnabas* his own Epistle. The most plausible Argument is drawn from Chap. 4. where the *Greek* is wanting. "Christ, saith this Father, "is the Lord of the World, to whom "God said, before the Foundation of the "World, *Let us make Man*, &c. But it appears by Chap. 5. whereof we have the Original, that *Barnabas* takes these Words in an allegoric and spiritual Sense: Reading alone takes away the difficulty. "God, as he saith, having renewed us "by the Remission of our Sins, hath "made us as it were Children, and "restor'd to us a Form totally spiritual. "For the Scripture speaks thus of us, "introducing God *as it were* speaking "to his Son, *Let us make Man according* "*to our Image*. And the Lord, beholding our new Nature, hath said to us, "*Increase*, &c. Behold now how he "hath spoken to his Son. I will once "more shew you how God hath given "you a new Figure in these last Times: "The Lord saith, *Behold I make all* "*things new*. It is as clear as the Sun, that this Expression, *Let us make Man*, is applied to the *New Creation*, to the second Form that God gives us: and that when God hath thus reform'd us by the Spirit of his Son, he hath as it were said to his Son, *Let us make Man*. You need not doubt then that the same allegorick Sense is to be look'd for in Chap. 4. which without any ground is taken literally. Whatever God saith according to the Letter, either speaking to the Angels, or consulting himself, may assuredly be said, in a mystical Sense, to have been spoken to his Son, by whose means he hath made a new Man. As if *Barnabas* should say, What God saith at the time of the first Creation, *Let us make Man according to our Image*, is found true concerning the New, but in a more sublime Sense, having in this made use of his Son to form Man according to the Image of his Holiness and Justice.

And if *Barnabas* did explain allegorically this Saying, *Let us make Man according to our Image*; why might not the Fathers in like manner explain these, *He spake, and the things were created?*

Hidden

Hidden and mystical Meanings were always sought for in the Old Testament. This *Ignatius* did in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*. "There is but one Teacher, "Jesus he, *that spake, and the thing was* "*done*; and all that he did in *silence* (not "only by teaching, but also suffering) "is a subject worthy of his Father. Where, as we see, he applies to J. C. what was said of God the Father, and to the New Creation, what was said of the Old. This is visible by the distinction he makes between the *Speech* and the *Silence* of J. C. between what he perform'd by his Preaching, and what he did by his Obedience and Patience.

Let us go on with *Barnabas*. In Chap. 5. whilst allegorizing on the Land of Promise, which flow'd with Milk and Honey; "We are those (saith he, speak-"ing of us Christians) whom God hath "brought into this blessed Land, being "nourish'd with the Faith of the Pro-"mise." And carrying on his Allegory in Chap. 6. *Enter into this Blessed Land*, &c. to which he gives that spiritual Meaning: "Learn what *Knowledg* saith (γνῶσις, "that is to say, the sublime Sense of this "Passage) Hope ye, saith he, in Jesus, "who is to be manifested to you in Flesh. Could he have recommended better to us the Science of Allegories, which he calls *Gnosticism*, or *Knowledg*, by way of Excellency? In the same Chapter he adapts to J. C. what was said of the Sacrifices of old, and particularly that of *Isaac*: He finds there a Figure of the Church, as also of J. C. and concludes thus: *This Calf, this Victim is J. C.* (ὁ μόσχος οὗτος ὁ θυόμενος Ἰησοῦς) Could he say that the Calf sacrificed was J. C. and may he not, by the same way of speaking, be call'd the *Word*? Because this was not only his Figure, but also the *Virtue* that actuated him in the Formation of the New World. In the 8th Chapter he allegorizeth strangely upon the Circumcision: He finds there a certain *Cabala*, in the number of the Persons whom *Abraham* caused to be circumcis'd; and discovers there the Name of *Jesus*, as also the Cross, and what not. This Science is pregnant with Inventions, it can find J. C. every where, in an Arithmetick Number, 318; in the Plural Number of a Noun, *The Gods have created*; and in the Plural Number of a Verb, *Let Us make Man*. See in Chap. 8. his Spiritual Meanings which he draws from the Prohibition of the Flesh of some Creatures: and taking notice that *Moses* said this only in a Figure, regarding the mystical Sense, the *Spirit*, and not the *Letter*; "*Moses*, saith he, spake thus "*in Spirit* (Μωσῆς ἐν πνεύματι ἐλάλησε.) If then *Moses* did speak of J. C. when he said, that *the Word created the World*; he did speak of this also *in Spirit*, and it is not true but in a spiritual Sense. In the 9th Chapter, besides the Allegory on the Water of Baptism, and upon the Cross of J. C. whereof he hath found a thousand Figures in the History of the People of old, which he brings to his bent by Violence and Artifice; he seeks particularly for a sublime Sense in the Name of *Joshua*, or *Jesus* the Son of *Nun*. He saith, "That the Fa-"ther hath shew'd us in *Joshua* every "thing that may be said of his Son "*Jesus*: insomuch that it may be said, according to him, that J. C. brought the People of the *Jews* into the Land of *Canaan*, because he had done it in *Joshua* his Figure; or rather, because he did the same in a spiritual Sense. So that J. C. was *Joshua*, by whom so many Miracles were wrought in the Land of *Canaan*; and for the same reason J. C. was the *Word* by which all things were made. I say, the *Word*; for altho *Barnabas* makes no mention of it in all his Epistle, yet he makes an allusion thereto in these Words, *Let Us make Man*; which he applies to J. C. Lastly, *Barnabas* adds, "Behold here Jesus again, "not the Son of Man, but the Son of "God, who appear'd in Flesh in his Fi-"gure. Who sees not here that Jesus the Son, not of a Man, as *Joshua* was, but the Son of God, being born of a

Virgin, did manifeſt himſelf in Fleſh, in a typical and figurative manner, in the Perſon of *Joſhua?* We may ſay likewiſe, according to this way of interpreting the Scriptures, that the ſame Jeſus created the World in the Perſon of that *Spirit*, or of that Word, which ſpake, and the Creature appear'd: becauſe that firſt *Word* was the Type of that other *Word*, which inſinuated it ſelf into J. C. and which ſaid, for example, *Lazarus come forth*, and *Lazarus* came forth immediately out of his Tomb, and from the Dead. That gave Life, and ſo did this. You may in the ſame ſenſe, as moſt of the Fathers did, ſay that J. C. appear'd to the Patriarchs; becauſe the appearing of the Angels in a Human Shape, was the Type of his Manifeſtation in Fleſh. Hence comes it that *Clement* of *Alexandria* calls him the myſtical Angel: the Angel being J. C. in a *Type*, and J. C. being the Angel in a *Myſtery*.

Moreover *Barnabas* continuing his Allegory upon the Sabbath and the Temple, whence he is continually drawing forth myſtical Interpretations, and having run over all the Figures of the Old Teſtament in the ſpiritual Application he makes of them to J. C. and his Church; he calls this Parables, and concludes: *You have here*, ſaith he, *all that regards the Glory of J. C.* viz. *how all things were made for him and by him.* Where by *all things*, without doubt, all thoſe Diſpenſations of the old Oeconomy are to be underſtood, which have any relation to him, to his Birth, Death or Reſurrection; the which he may be ſaid to have done, not literally, but ſpiritually, in the Perſon of the Prophets who were his Figures. This is ſo clear by the ſequel and coherence of his Diſcourſe, that I have been amaz'd at the Confidence of Dr. *Bull*, who, in his *Defence of the Council of* Nice, *p.* 67. dares to quote theſe Words, as if *Barnabas* had ſaid them of the firſt Creation. For it is ſo far from theſe Expreſſions being ſerviceable to his Hypotheſis, that they demonſtrate on the contrary how theſe Words, *that all things* were made by J. C. are to be underſtood; that is, becauſe either he did them in his Types, as *Barnabas* teaches us here, or becauſe he meant that the ſame Power, or one like to that which created the old World, and inſpired the Prophets, did dwell in J. C. Whoever knows the Character of *Barnabas* but a little, muſt be very conceited, if he gives any other Senſe to his Words. See here the Judgment of Mr. *Du Pin* concerning him, (*Biblioth. Tom.* 1. at the Word *Barnabas*) "The "Epiſtle of this Father, ſaith he, is "full of forc'd Allegories on the Holy "Scriptures, and with extraordinary "Explications deviating from good "Senſe ——— But theſe Allegories, "theſe myſtical Explications and Fables, "hinder not this Epiſtle from being his "whoſe Name it bears. You muſt have "but a ſmall inſight into the Genius "of the *Jews*, and the firſt Chriſtians "brought up in the Synagogue, if you "believe that ſuch kind of Thoughts "could not be theirs. On the contrary, "this was their very Character, they "learn'd of the *Jews* to turn the Scriptures into an Allegory. ——We ought "not then to wonder, that St. *Barnabas*, "a *Jew* by Birth, and writing to the "*Jews*, ſhould explain allegorically many of the Paſſages of the Old Teſtament, and apply them to the New. "——Every body knows that the Books "of the firſt Chriſtians are full of this "ſort of Fables and Allegories.

Mr. *Le Moine* is of the ſame Judgment in his Notes on *Barnabas*. To conclude, the Term γνῶσις is very familiar to this Author, he means by it a ſublime and profound Senſe. This appears by his infinitely extolling this *Knowledg* (which he alſo names *Science* and *Wiſdom*) above the Vertues which accompany Faith. This way of diſtinguiſhing Science from Faith, was follow'd by *Origen*: it ſeems that *Gnoſticiſm* was brought in by this Allegorick *Science* of the Scriptures, and

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afterwards degenerated into Poetical Speculations and an Heathenish Philosophy. The first Method was *Jewish*, the second *Platonic*. All which seems to prove that the Author of this Epistle was a true *Gnostic*: I mean one of the first of them, who imitated the *Jewish* Cabala in their mystical Interpretations of the Old Testament, which was accounted a sublime Science; but not one of those *Gnosticks*, who were afterwards decried for converting that Allegoric Science into a Philosophy merely Pagan. For these last who were *Gentile* Profelytes, imagining they had the same right with the Profelyte *Jews*, to the use of these Allegoric Interpretations, adapted presently the *Theogony* of their Poets, and the Ideas of *Plato*, to the Evangelical Truths. The former sought for a mystical sense of the Law, but the latter the sublime sense of Philosophy, both of them in relation to Jesus Christ and his Holy Doctrine.

Those of the latter sort who passed the Bounds in this Method, and made so wide a *Pleroma*, were called Hereticks: but those that used it with a greater Caution and Modesty, and who carried the *Pleroma* no further than the three Æons (which seemed to have some ground in the Scriptures) and kept a Decorum better in their Resemblances, had the good fortune to pass for Orthodox even to Posterity. I think it is better to argue thus about the Author of this Epistle, than to say with Dr. *Hammond*, that he opposeth *Cabala* to *Cabala*, and that by the Term γνῶσις, he attacks the false Science of the *Gnosticks*. For it doth not appear that he disputes with any body, unless it be only against the *Jews*, who would not receive his Allegories: However it doth not appear that *Gnosticism*, such as it was at that time confined to mere Allegory on the Scripture, was then decried. On the contrary this Author recommends it, and that not in opposition to the false one, as *Clement* of *Alexandria* did afterwards, but absolutely as it is in it self. As for me, I doubt not at all, that the Jargon of the ensuing Fathers, who blended the *Platonic* Studies with the *Jewish* Method, did proceed from this way of philosophizing allegorically on the Scriptures, which was very innocent at first; or rather they coupled together the two Methods of allegorizing, namely the *Oriental* and the Greek. *Clement*, *Hermas* and *Barnabas*, carried on their Allegory according to the Oriental Custom, in order to find out the mystic sense: The ensuing Fathers, newly come out of *Plato*'s School, and having an extraordinary conceit of his Principles, did from an innocent Allegory build up a Pagan Philosophy, which, in giving us *three Hypostases*, gives us also *three Gods* literally so, and well told.

Father *Simon* both saw and own'd this Truth in his Supplement to the Ceremony of the *Jews* (*pag.* 16.) "Some of "the *Jews*, saith he, applied themselves to the *Platonic* Philosophy, "which they have blended with their "Phrenzies, whence arose a great part "of their Cabalistic Sciences. We "ought also to attribute to this their "studying of the *Platonic* Philosophy, "many Expressions found in their *antient Allegorical Books*, which are not "far distant from those the Christians "use to explain the Mystery of the Trinity. Let us consider well this Remark. It demonstrates that the Trinity was not drawn from the Christian Religion: for if the *Platonic Jews*, who had not a grain of Christianity, did talk of this Mystery like the Christians, and that we ought to attribute these Expressions only to the Mixture of the *Platonic* Philosophy with their Phrenzies, it will follow then that the Christians likewise, either brought this Doctrine out of the School of *Plato*, or took it from the Phrenzies of the *Jews*: and we are induced to believe this to be so, because the Fathers who talked of it came out of that School, and professed Platonism, before they were ingaged to Christianity,

or

or at least before they had betook themselves to the Study of the Scriptures, as *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, *Tatian*, *Theophilus*, *Irenæus*, *Clement* of *Alex.* &c. who were all professed Sophists. Shew us, I pray, but one Writer who spoke of it from a Principle of Religion, without bringing in the Prejudices of Philosophy. Did this come to pass because there were no Christian, who without having studied *Plato*, could speak of the *Word* out of the Scriptures alone, if to be the Scriptures have spoken of it in the sense of *Plato*? Where is that Christian that talked of it upon the Basis of Religion alone? Let him be produced. There have been no doubt some who wrote concerning Religion, but we have lost their Works, and why? Because they had not the stamp of *Plato*. Moreover, seeing these Gentlemen maintain that the Christians of *Judea* had the same Sentiments in this Affair with the *Gentile* Christians, whence comes it that no Fathers but the *Gentile* are produced, and not so much as one of the Brethren of the Circumcision, and Successors of St. *James*? Are there none but Philosophers that can write of the Mysteries of Religion? The Writings of *Hegesippus*, the most considerable of the Christian *Jews* of whom we have any account, perish'd because of his Errors; as *Valesius* upon *Eusebius* observes it, *viz.* because he spoke not the Language of *Plato*. The rest had the same Fate, there being but few that remain, as *Barnabas* and *Hermas*. But have these talked of a *Pre-existent Word*? Not at all, unless it be in Allegory. The Reason of this, I pray? Certainly because they found it not in the Christian Religion, nor yet in the *Jewish*; and having not studied in the School of *Plato*, they could not bring it thence into the Church of J. C.

As to the Books of *Hegesippus* which perished because of their Errors, I remember that the *Defender of the Fathers* doth somewhat exclaim, that *Valesius* did not declare expressly that they perished by reason of any Errors contrary to *Platonism*. A mere wrangling! As if the Doctrine of *Plato* were not at that time, and many Ages after, the only Rule by which Truth and Error were determined. *Valesius* in this place speaks of two sorts of Books that perished because of their Errors. The first, that gave him occasion to mention the other, were the *Hypotyposes* of *Clement* of *Alexandria*, who had positive Errors wherewith *Platonism* was offended. Pray read the 109 Cod. of *Photius*, where this Critic relates them. I dare say that the *Eternity of Matter*, *the Transmigration or the Revolution of Souls*, *the Commerce of Angels with Women*, and other such like Errors, which *Photius* ascribes to *Clement*, troubled not much the good *Platonists*. We know that for the greatest part these were their Darlings. What was it then, at which they were so much offended? Those other Errors which overthrow the *Platonic* Hypotheses concerning the Generation and Incarnation of the *Word*, *viz.* "The Son's being "numbred among the Creatures; and "that neither of the two *Words* that "came out of the Father was incarnated, "not so much as the lesser of them; "but only that a certain Virtue flowing "from the Word it self, did insinuate it "self into the Minds of Men, and there "became their Understanding or Rea- "son. This good Father believed no other Incarnation than that of Human Reason, which flowed out like a Ray from the Substance of God, and descended into the Flesh of Men, to become their Guide and Light. He was a true Quaker.

The other Books *Valesius* names are those of *Hegesippus* and *Papias*, which in relation to *Platonism* could not be guilty of other Errors but those of Omission: that is to say, they perished because of their Simplicity, and because they talked not like *Plato*. And we have reason to believe the same Fate had likewise attended some other of the Antients

ents that remain, which, as *Photius* judges, are too simple and too much reserved in relation to the Divinity of J. C. but that some small respect for them preserved them. The first Ages regarded them as parts of the Holy Scripture, and this Credit they had got in the Church, preserv'd them from Shipwrack. The *Defender* is then to know, that the Tenent about the *Trinity* and *Incarnation*, did always regulate the Fate of Books and Authors; and that *Orthodoxy* and *Heterodoxy* were judged of, according to these Favourite Tenents of *Plato*. Why I pray, have the four first General Councils, of which the World rings so much, destroyed so many Books and Men? Was it not for these two Tenents? All the rampant Disputes ever since turn'd upon those Hinges. The reason hereof is, for that the Truth of these two Articles lies in an *indivisible Point*, all around are Precipices of Error; there being so small a distance between Truth and Error, that it is altogether imperceptible. The *Trinitarians* are divided into *Real* and *Nominal*. Among the Real Dr. *Sherlock* hath his particular Hypothesis, the Bishop of *Gloucester* his, as also Mr. *Asgr.* Amongst the Nominal, the Bishop of *Salisbury* is of one Opinion, Dr. *Wallis* of another, Dr. *South* differs from them both. Range them by Hundreds, there will not be one that will keep to the *precise Point*, that forms this Chimerical Orthodoxy, which is boasted of by every one, but attained to by none, for they treat one another as Hereticks. Here is a large Field for you to scour about, and raise a thousand nice Questions in, which the most acute can't perceive, and to find Heresies in those that have had the Misfortune to displease you. Must an overgrown Bishop be deposed, whose See lies convenient for me, or a Competitor stopt in his Career? I have no more to do but only examine them about these two Points in question; if they have not found the *indivisible Point* precisely, and who can do it? They are undone: I will prove demonstratively that their Opinion is *Heretical*, *Impious* and *Blasphemous*. I shall call both the *East* and *West* to my Aid: and what is more, I shall have the Pleasure to see three or four hundred Bishops assembled in a General Council, who shall unanimously vote for me, for the accused is always in the wrong; the Thunderbolts and Anathemas shall follow. Thus the whole World will be in a Flame for a Tride. Alas! the Memory of such a Number of vain Disputes between *Nestorius* and *Eutyches* cannot be renewed, without making the Christian World to blush. But whoever could give us the secret History of all the antient Councils, like to that of the Council of *Trent*, would certainly infinitely oblige the Christian World.

But lastly, perhaps the Defender did not perceive my having answer'd his trifling Difficulty before hand: let us then make him sensible of it. Let us examine the Relish of the Antients, and see what Books they have preserved for us, what Character they bear, and of what Stamp they are. I told you already, that they have not left us any Father of the Christians of the Circumcision, but only some Gentiles brought up in the School of *Plato*. We have indeed a *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, *Theophilus*, *Tatian*, *Irenæus*, *Clement* of *Alexand.* *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and some others of the same sort, Fathers indeed who breathe nothing but Platonism. This is the precious Relick Antiquity has left us: It is easy then to draw the consequence, What Evil hath it destroyed? All those that mocked *Plato*, that spake not as *Plato*. We do the *Defender* justice, if from the Books of the Antients we print but those it relected. He hath then left his Cattle; for the Collection we have, could not be such by Chance, the Caprice of the Times, or such like Accidents: No, it is too uniform; choice presided here at least as to the Character of those Books; but Time and the Fate of

of Libraries, may have had a share in the rest.

I return to my Subject, and must observe here, that if the Allegories of *Barnabas* are very evident, because they are so frequent and characteriz'd by the Terms of *Spirit* and *Figure*, which he makes use of to denote them to be so, yet this happens not always. The Fathers speak them out often so absolutely, that it is only the Matter it self that can make us discern them. Thus the Allegories of *Origen* have often deceived his Readers: "For this Father, as Mr. *Huet* observes "it (*Origen. Quæst.* 14.) passing often "from the Explication of the Letter to a "Spiritual Sense imperceptibly, his "Readers took his Allegories for Dog-"matical Assertions. What he hath said of *Origen* may be applied to all the rest of the Fathers: *Irenæus* for example (*Lib.* 4. *cap.* 37.) speaks out (in down-right Terms, without any hint of a Figure) an Allegory he made upon the Spies sent by *Joshua* to *Jericho*: "*Rahab* "the Harlot, saith he, in receiving the "Spies, conceal'd in her House the *Fa-*"*ther*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost*. Who would not believe, if you take this literally, as the *Trinitarians* are wont, but that these Spies were actually the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* in a human Shape, there being nothing in the Words here to hint the Adaptation and Allegory? Really, if *Irenæus* had said, as he might very well at this rate, that *Abraham* receiving the Angels that went to destroy *Sodom*, gave a Dinner to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*; a Mystery would certainly have been found in these Words, pretending that *Abraham* did entertain these three Persons of the Deity, who appeared to him in the Form of three Angels or three Men?

What difference is there, I pray, between this way of speaking we now suppose, and what *Irenæus* really made use of? None, and you must grant, that if you think you have good ground, from such like Expressions, to make a supreme God in three Persons, of the three Angels; you may likewise conclude the Spies of *Jericho*, to have been the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, really and literally so. For whatever may be said to the contrary, it is as impossible that Angels should be God, as for the Spies to be so. Surely the Repugnancy in the Nature of the things themselves, which Authors compare mutually, ought always to determine us to look for a figurative and allegoric sense there, especially when it appears to us, that these Allegories are agreeable to the Genius and Custom of those Authors, or at least of their Predecessors and Masters; it being certain, that tho the Disciples often alter the Method of their Masters, yet there will still remain some Footsteps of the antient Doctrine, betraying and discovering their Innovations. This is the Lot of the *Platonic* Fathers, as we shall show hereafter.

For the present the Example of *Irenæus* is sufficient to inform us, that according to the same way of speaking, which calls the Spies the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, we may also say that J. C. was the *Word* which created the World, and the Angel that appeared to the Patriarchs. See what Annotator *Feuerdentius* saith on this Passage of *Irenæus*. "An old Copy adds the Word *Three* to "the Spies, which would agree very "well with the three Divine *Hypostases*, "had not the Scripture assured us that "there were but *Two* and not *Three*. *Justin* hath also much the same Allegory in his Dialogue. It is likely that *Irenæus* carried on his Allegory but to the *Father* and *Son*, in relation to the two Spies: but for fear the *Holy Ghost* should be thereby excluded, some Knave put him in too; and then the Word *Three* must be added to the *Spies*, that so all might be adjusted to the three Divine Persons. Thus various Readings proceed from the Boldness of the Orthodox: but howeven it be, you see the Allegory; either reject it in this Place, or acknowledg

ledg it every where elſe, where there is the like neceſſity for it. As the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* were allegorically in the Spies of *Jericho*; in like manner J. C. was allegorically in all the Diſpenſations of old, in the *Word* that created the World, in the Angels and the Prophets that ſpake to Men; becauſe, if I may ſay ſo, theſe Diſpenſations were the Figures of the great Oeconomy of J. C. or rather of God the *Father*, manifeſting himſelf in the Fleſh of his *Son*. Therefore *Irenæus* calls it the Diſpenſation which was from the Beginning. You may ſee what *Voſſius* ſaith in his Notes concerning theſe Allegories of *Barnabas* and the other Fathers: " It is " known by all, ſaith he, how theſe " firſt Chriſtians interpreted the Scrip- " tures, after a myſtic and ſuperſtitious " manner; I was like to ſay childiſh and fooliſh. *Cotelier* ſaith almoſt the ſame, and ſhews their Abſurdities. But take this along with you, that theſe dull Allegories did not by far ſo much Miſchief, as that Chriſtianity in Maſquerade, which ſome other Fathers borrowed from *Plato*. It is of theſe you may more juſtly ſay, than of the Allegoriſts (according to one of our Criticks) that the Day theſe good Fathers were writing ſo many philoſophic Viſions, they voided a Purge, (*Purgamentum aliquod cacaſſe.*)

Let us now come to *Hermas*, who is as well ſtored with Viſions and Parables as *Barnabas*: At leaſt his Method is the ſame. In his Parable or Similitude the 9*th*, §. 12. he ſaith, " That the Rock " is the Son of God; now the Rock is " of old, becauſe the Son of God is " more antient than any Creature, inaſ- " much as he aſſiſted in the Council of " his Father, in order to form the Crea- " ture. All this is ſaid in a myſtic and an allegoric ſenſe, to explain that the Father did all in regard to his Son and the new Creation: The Author having ſaid as much in his firſt Viſion, §. 4. concerning the Church: for asking of the Angel, " Why the Church of God " is an old Woman; the Angel anſwers, " becauſe ſhe was the firſt thing that " was created, and that it was by reaſon " of her the World was made (It is like- ly, in the Greek it was διὰ ταύτης, which the Tranſlator rendered not *per illam*, but *propter illam*) You ſee then that this Father ſaith no more of J. C. than he doth of the Church; and that theſe Words *antiquior omni Creatura* mean the ſame thing with *anus prima omnium creata*, which are true only in a myſtic ſenſe, but falſe in the Letter. Conſe- quently then J. C. is *from the Beginning* in the ſame ſenſe, that the Church is ſo: I mean in the Decree and Deſign of God, which the Author expreſſeth by his *being in the Council of the Father*, which he borrowed manifeſtly from the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom*. I ſhall now pro- duce a remarkable Inſtance of the Alte- ration that enſued as to the Tenent it ſelf, notwithſtanding the Terms remained the ſame. You ſee that *Hermas* ſaith here, *the Son of God is more antient than any Creature*, and that he ſpeaks ſo alle- gorically: Let us get over one Age or two, and you ſhall ſee *Origen* making uſe of the ſame Expreſſion, but in an *Arian* ſenſe: " The Holy Scriptures, " ſaith he (*Lib. 5. contra Celſ.*) diſ- " cover the Son of God to us, *as the* " *moſt antient of all the Creatures* (πρε- " βύτατον πάντων τῶν δημιουργημάτων) He means that he was created a little before the World: but let us return to our Subject.

Juſtin Martyr, who firſt taught the *Pre-exiſtence* of the *Word*, imitating the Notion of *Hermas*, did teach the Pre-ex- iſtence of Chriſtians no leſs than that of Chriſt himſelf, whilſt (*Apol.* 2.) he ſaith, " That all thoſe who were Partа- " kers of the *Word* or *Reaſon*, as well " *Greeks* as *Barbarians*, were Chriſtians; " and conſequently Chriſtians did not " commence yeſterday or to day, but " were always and every where *a prin-* " *cipio*, ſaith he, *from the beginning*; at- tributing to them the very Prerogative

of the *Word* it self. These good Men turn'd themselves every way to ward off the Reproach of Novelty, wherewith Christianity was charged. In like manner *Eusebius*, endeavouring to prove that the Christian Religion was not new, maintains that the Patriarchs profest it, and that it was instituted *from the beginning* (*Hist. Eccles. Lib.* c. 4.) Thus much he cannot advance but in a mystic sense, as he observes it himself, because all those, who acted justly and served that God who is above all, were Christians. Consequently then Christ could not converse otherwise with them, but in the same manner as they professed Christianity; which cannot be true, but by way of *Analogy* and *Accommodation*. Christ then pre existed, as the Christian Religion and Christians did pre-exist.

Let us return to *Hermas*. It is manifest that he allegoriz'd, even by his entituling his third Book, where he speaks of the Pre-existence of J. C. *Similitudes* or *Parables*, which carry on throughout spiritual and mystic senses, as is evident by *Similitude* 5. where he explains the Parable of the Father of a Family in a theological manner, in relation to the *Father*, the *Holy Ghost*, and the *Son*. The *Father* in the Plan of his Allegory is the *Landlord*, the Holy Spirit is the *Son* of the Houshold; and he who out of Allegory is called the *Son*, is but a Servant in the Allegory. "The Landlord, saith "he, is the same who created all things, "the Son is the Holy Ghost, and the "*Son of God* is the Servant. He goes on, and adds a little after: "The Holy "Ghost insinuated himself into the Bo-"dy wherein God was to dwell; and "this Body whereinto the *Holy Ghost* did "insinuate himself, having served the "Holy Ghost, and having been faithful "to him always, did obtain the Appro-"bation of God by his Labours and O-"bedience. By the Holy Ghost cannot be meant here the second Person, which is called the Divine Nature of J. C. as Dr. *Bull* pretends; for who sees not that *Hermas* speaks here of that Spirit of Sanctification, which prepared the Body of J. C. for Prophecy, and consecrated it for a Temple for God to dwell in? And seeing this Idea of the Holy Spirit's being infus'd into the Body of J. C. is so conformable to what the Holy Scriptures deliver concerning it, you must be very extravagant if you think that *Hermas* differed from it? Besides, what could he mean, if his sense were the same with that Dr. *Bull* attributes to him? Would he introduce two *Sons of God*, so opposite one to the other? The one who serves and obeys; and the other who is served and obeyed; and what is yet more strange, *two Sons of God* in the self-same Person of J. C. our Lord. "The Son, "saith *Hermas*, is the Holy Spirit, and "the *Son of God* is the Servant. Now if the *Divine Nature* of J. C. be denoted by the *Spirit*, and that the Servant signifies the *Human Nature*, you will have *two Sons* according to the very Letter. Thus the Orthodox embroil all things to fish for Mysteries in Troubled Water; whereas nothing is more clear than the meaning of *Hermas*. He allegorizeth and would say, By him whom the Parable calls the Son, I mean nothing else but the Holy Spirit; and by him whom the Parable calls a Servant, I mean J. C. our Lord, who out of the Parable is the proper *Son of God*: And behold here the ground of my Allegory, *viz.* that the Holy Spirit, who insinuated himself into J. C. becoming his Director and Master, may justly be compar'd to the *Son of the Family*; but J. C. himself having always obeyed the Holy Spirit, must be compared to a *Servant*. It is therefore in Allegory that J. C. is the Servant; and so likewise in Allegory, that the Holy Spirit is the Son of God: It is in Allegory that the Church is the first of all the Creatures; and consequently in Allegory, that the Son of God is more antient than all the Creatures, and that he assisted at the Council of God. The whole is Allegory in *Hermas*, the whole is

Vision,

Vision, *Similitude* and *Parable* there. The Faith in his Writings (*Simil.* 9. §. 13, and 15.) and all the other Vertues are called *Holy Spirits*; he ushers them in like Virgins well apparel'd, kissing the *Son of God*, who also lie with *Hermas* himself as with a Brother. The Fiction of Persons is so familiar to this Author, that if you would find a Person of the Trinity there, you shall but catch at a shadow. Let it then be acknowledged by all, that we ought not to look for any thing but Allegories and Similitudes in this Book of his, bearing the same Title. Whereas in the second Book entituled the *Commandments*, where the Doctrines are set forth more simply, he speaks not from the very first Commandment, but of one God the Creator; which is the whole Idea he gives us of this supreme Being, without any mention of three Persons, of an eternal Generation, or Incarnation. Which demonstrates that he had a different Idea from that of a *Consubstantial Trinity*, or of three equal *Hypostases*, whatever he said elsewhere of the *Father*, *Son*, and Holy Ghost.

But as this Allegory of *Hermas* touching Christ misled the *Platonic* Fathers, who took it literally, being prejudiced by the Philosophy they were brought up in: There is another in the sixth *Commandment*, by which they were no less impos'd on: "There is, saith he, "two Genius's in Man, the one of Justice, "the other of Iniquity." The *Greek* had it, no doubt, *two Angels*; and so this Passage is read in the Translator of *Origen* (*Hom.* 35. *in Luc.*) *duos Angelos*. Hereupon the Fathers have gravely handed down to us, that there are *two Angels*, the one of Good, the other of Evil, that attend a Man from his Birth. (Just as they have told us, that the Angels fell in Love with the Daughters of Men, having mistaken the Allegory of the Souls, that delight to abide in our Bodies) But let the Fathers talk on. This being taken in a literal sense, is ridiculous and contrary to Scripture, especially the evil Angel. Can it be doubted here, that *Hermas* intended only to allegorize upon the twofold Inclination in Men towards Good and Evil? It is certain that the *Chaldeans*, *Jews* and *Mahometans*, as also some *Pagan* Philosophers, did affect such like Allegories, and personalized these two Inclinations. Every thing was an Angel to the *Jews*, especially with the *Pharisees* when they disputed against the *Sadducees*, who denied their Existence. As to the Heathens, we have shewn before, that the Wisdom of *Socrates* was his *Demon* and *Genius*. We have stumbled at this Oriental Philosophy which allegorized upon every thing, spiritualized and personalized all. It is by the like Mistake that *gross Platonism* took literally, what the *subtil Platonism* said only in Allegory; and made three *Hypostases* of the three Divine Powers, concurring in the Creation of the World. Now these Divines, who turn'd these two Inclinations in Man into two Angelical Persons, are the same that metamorphosed the Power of God, which created the World, into a Divine Person, a Son begotten of God, and consubstantial with his Father. Will you trust 'em still, and boast notwithstanding of the Acuteness and Penetration of our Age, yet foolish enough to be besotted with all these Chimeras? Shall we never comprehend, that what *Moses* said in a literal sense, that by the Word of God or his Command all things were created in the beginning; the Apostles spake it in a mystic sense of J. C. who is the Word of the Father which created all things, to wit, in the new Creation, having put all things into a new Form and Order, as well the Angels in Heaven, as the Men here on Earth?

It is evident by *Clemens Romanus*, that the Antients made use of continual allusions to the first Creation, wherein they sought for a mystic sense, in reference to the second, performed by J. C. In his second *Ep. c.* 1. he speaks thus of our

Redemption: " When we were with-
" out Understanding, and worshipped
" Stone and Wood, God had pity on us
" ——for he call'd us when we were
" not in being, and would have us to
" pass from no Being into a Being (ἐκά-
" λεσεν γὰρ ἡμᾶς ὄντας, καὶ ἐβούλησεν ἐκ
" μὴ ὄντος εἶναι ἡμᾶς) Without doubt he speaks of the New Creation, and that in Terms as strong as were used in reference to the First, causing us to pass from *no Being* into a *Being*; as if we were form'd out of nothing, when we were reformed by the Gospel. These Terms seem to be absolute; but we ought not to be deceived by them, and will do well if we seek here for a comparative sense, considering that Authors neglect very often to use the Particles denoting this Figure, which soften the Expression; as for example, *As it were, That we may say so, If I may speak thus.* All may perceive, that if *Clement* had said of J. C. as he might have done, *That he called us when we were not in Being, and made us to exist out of Nothing*; these Words would have been stretched, as if they attributed our Creation out of Nothing to J. C. It would have been said, Behold here J. C. particularly described, to be *him that calls Things not in being, as if they were.* Now by a stronger Inference this sense ought to be given them, seeing they were spoken of the Father, who is the Creator of Heaven and Earth: yet we must agree however herein, for the Scope of the Subject requires it, that they intend only the New Creation; and consequently must own, that when the Sacred Authors and their Disciples, seem to attribute the Creation of all Things to J. C. we have the same Reason to look on such like Expressions as Allegories, which set before our Eyes the forming of the New Creature, by Representations drawn from the old Creation.

The same *Clement* (*Ep.* 1. *c.* 12.) allegorizeth upon the Scarlet Rope of *Rahab.* Good Criticks do not question this, tho he speaks as if his Allegoric Sense were the only true one, for he praiseth not only the Faith, but also the Prophecy of this Woman, declaring by it the future Redemption by the Blood of J. C. " This Allegory of *Clemens*, saith " *Cotelier* in his Notes, is approved of " by many of great Note, quoting the " Fathers that followed him therein. Note, he calls it an Allegory, altho in *Clement* it hath all the Air of a simple and natural Sense. If it be so, his History of a *Phœnix* ought not to seem so strange to us; it is a Fable containing a great Truth in his Opinion; he makes use of it as of an ingenious Allegory, that seems to have been made expressly to represent to Men the Doctrine of the Resurrection.

As to the rest, whenever *Clement* doth not allegorize, he explains to us simply his Sentiment about the *Word* and the *Trinity.* As to the former, he saith in *Chap.* 27. of his *1st Ep.* to the *Corinthians*: " That God founded all things by " the Word of his Power, and that he " can destroy them by the same Word (ἐν λόγῳ, *utrobique*) Whence it is evident, that the Word in his sense is only the Power and Efficacy of God, by which as he created the World, he can also destroy it when he pleaseth. This agrees with the Scriptures saying, *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth,* Psal. 33. 6. and that by the same Breath he destroys the Wicked, *Isa.* 11. 4. & 2 *Thess.* 2. 8. We cannot find here the *Platonic* Ideas of a *Personalized Word*; so that *Photius* had reason to complain (*Bibl. Cod.* 126.) that *Clement* did not speak of J. C. in that sublime Stile, which is made use of when God is spoken of. His Simplicity has offended those that love only the high-flown Philosophy of *Plato.* For whereas a *Platonic* Christian would never have omitted on such an occasion, to inculcate that God the Father created all things by his Son, who is his *Word* and eternal Wis-

Wiſdom; *Clement* is dumb here, and contents himſelf to attribute the Creation to the Power or the Command of God. Elſewhere, when he ſpeaks expreſly of J. C. he withholds himſelf from giving him any other Excellencies or Titles, than thoſe reſulting from the Offices he poſſeſſeth by the Gift of God, as a Recompence for his Sufferings, *viz.* thoſe of an *High-Prieſt* and *Lord*, never quoting any other Paſſages but thoſe that ſerve to this purpoſe. As to his *Trinity*, nothing is more ſimple; for being willing to move the *Corinthians* to Concord and Union, he alledgeth this Motive among the reſt: "Have we any other "but the ſame God, the ſame Chriſt, "and the ſame Spirit of Grace ſhed upon "us? This is a *Trinity* of a Man truly *Apoſtolic*, *one God*, *one Meſſiah*, and *one Spirit* ſhed upon the Faithful.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Method of the refin'd Platoniſts, *and of Allegory in General.*

FROM theſe Diſciples of the Apoſtles, let us come to the Diſciples of *Plato*. Peruſe the *Platoniſt* Writers, and you'll therein find yet ſome remains of *well contrived Platoniſm*. They, having conceived the *Ideas* and *Archetypes* of all Creatures, which are in the viſible World, to be in the *intelligible* World, did eaſily invent a *Spiritual* and *Intelligible* Goſpel, which is the Subſtance and Firſt Form of the *ſenſible* Goſpel; a *Diſtinction* which *Origen* did not fail to make, as he diſtinguiſhe between the *exemplary* and *ideal* Word, different from the *ſenſible Word*; and as he expreſſes it, in his ſecond *Tom.* on *John*: "A *Word* "which was in *God*, and which was as "different from that which was made "Fleſh, as an Original is from the Co"py, Subſtance and Reality from the "Shadow. They uſe the Compariſon of an Architect, who has in his Mind the Idea and Plan of a Houſe he intends to build. Whereon, they giving themſelves liberty, find all the Wonders of our Goſpel in the Ideas of the Divine Underſtanding. If in the *ſenſible* Church there be found an Oracle and Interpreter from God, born of the Father by the Holy Ghoſt, making the new Creature by the Power and Wiſdom, which he has received from the Father: To this they make another Anſwer in the *intelligible* Church, a *Word* proceeding from the Boſom or Underſtanding of God, begotten of his Subſtance, who is the Eternal Wiſdom of God, and ſecondary Cauſe of all things ſubſiſting in the World. Take off the veil of Allegory, or rather ſuppoſe all that to be Allegory; and 'tis a rational Philoſophy, which reduces all to God's eternal Decrees as the prime Cauſe of all exiſtent Beings, but particularly of *Chriſt*, who being with reſpect to his *Eſſence* the only Son and *Firſtborn of all Creatures*, conſequently is in God's *Underſtanding* the *Idea*, which God *immediately begets*, whereon all others depend: He is, I ſay, the nobleſt *Idea*, or as ſome ſpeak, the *Idea* of *Ideas*. And if they found this *Chriſt* in the *Ideas* and *Decrees* of God, it is not to be wonder'd if they found him alſo in the antient Diſpenſation of Angels, while 'tis not more difficult ſeeing him in thoſe firſt Sketches, than in the Deſign and Idea which God had fram'd of him. Thus far I perceive right *Platoniſm*, I ſee

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in it the Foot-steps of what it was, when in its Purity; and I at the same time observe in it fair remains of antient Allegory, either of the *Jews* or of the *Chaldeans*, who delighted in profound Senses and theological Interpretations. But I no sooner cast my eye on those *eternal Substances*, conceiv'd as real *Emanations*, those *Emanations* as real *Generations*, and those *Generations* as subsisting *Persons*; than I see only deprav'd *Platonism*, as absurd as the Theology of the Poets, and as unpolish'd as the Religion of the most superstitious Vulgar.

To make this Truth the more evident, 'twill be necessary to say somewhat of Allegory, and of the use which the Antients made of it. But we must, as I promis'd in Page 64. at the same time shew that Disciples who oftimes change their Masters Method, do nevertheless retain certain Remains of the antient Discipline, which betrays them, and discovers their Innovations: That is, we will shew the tracks of the antient manner of allegorizing, even in those very men who have abandon'd the Allegory of the three *Principles*, and chosen the literal Sense of three *Hypostases*. I have already given some account of it, which ought to be recall'd to mind by the Reader, to join to what I have farther to say thereon.

Allegory is a Figure in Speech, whereby one thing is expressed, and another intimated, by rising from the literal to a nobler and more theological Sense. See *Grotius* on *Matth.* ch. 1. 22. I shall not here speak of the Enigmatical Science of the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, but come directly to the Philosophy which is most known to us. But before I come to Particulars, I must advertise my Reader, that if he would be fully inform'd on this Head, he may read all the 5th Book of the *Stromates* of *Clemens Alexandrinus*. I'll content my self with quoting thence the following Words, which give us a general Idea of the Antients Method in the use they made of Allegory. "All "those, says that Father, who have "treated of Divine Matters, as well "*Greeks* as *Barbarians*, concealing the "*Principles* of things, wrap'd the Truth "in Enigma's, Symbols, Allegories and "Metaphors, as intricate as those of "the Oracles. —— Even the Poets, who "learnt Theology of the Prophets (per-"haps of the *Egyptian* Prophets) did "often philosophize according to the "hidden Sense, *δι' ὑπονοίας*.

Having made this general Observation, I pass to somewhat more particular. A great noise has been made in the World of the Opinion of *Pythagoras* concerning the Transmigration of Souls. The literal Sense which has been given to this Opinion, has been almost generally receiv'd; and there have been but few Persons who perceiv'd that it only run on a mere Allegory, thro want of duly reflecting on the Genius of antient Philosophy.

Cœlius Secundus Curio, was one of those who saw thro the Mystery of it (*Aranei*, *p.* 42, &c.) "As to the Opinion of "*Pythagoras*, says he, I can never per-"suade my self that that Learned Phi-"losopher ever came to such a degree "of Absurdity, as to believe, that the "Souls of Men passed out of one Body "into another. Let us not doubt, but "that he thereby intended to signify the "Change whereunto *Matter* is subject, "making it continually pass from one "form to another; a Metamorphosis "which that Philosopher call'd *Regenera-*"*tion* (*Palingenesiam*) or a *Metempsychosis*, "which, according to him, is nothing "but the Transmigration of the Spirit "infus'd in Matter, and with it trans-"mitted into all the several Forms which "it puts on, 'Twas the misunderstand-ing of this Revolution of Souls, which made some Hereticks say, that *Adam*'s Soul had pass'd into *Jesus Christ*, in misapplying some Texts of Scripture, where *Christ* is called the second *Adam*, and which suppose a kind of Analogy between the one and the other. 'Tis by a like Mistake that some others held that the

the Soul of *Elias* had passed into the Body of *John Baptist*, grounding themselves on these Words, that *John* came in the Spirit and Power of *Elias*: and not comprehending that these Words refer to the Conformity of Zeal and Courage between those two Prophets. But when once the right understanding of a mere Figure in Speech comes to be lost, and the literal Sense prevails, into what Extravagances are we not capable of falling? Witness the monstrous Doctrine of Transubstantiation, which owes its birth to the Ignorance of an Allegory a little strain'd.

Again, Have not some fallen into a prodigious Error, by literally taking that Expression of the Apostle, where he says, that *Melchisedec* was without Father, without Mother, and without Descent? Have not Men infer'd from those Words, that *Melchisedec* was not of the Posterity of *Adam*, as other Men are? Some having supposed him a *Celestial Man* consubstantial with the eternal *Son of God*, others that he was an *Angel*, others the *Holy Ghost*, others the *Son of God* himself; and lastly, others a *Power* superior to the Son of God, from which the Son of God had receiv'd his everlasting High-Priesthood. I am asham'd for Christians, when I think with what Superstition they consecrate all their Fancies, and make as many Mysteries of them. In short, I might venture to affirm, that the Fable of *Simon* the Magician's flying in the Air, carry'd by Devils, and struck down by St. *Peter*, is no more than a mere Allegory of St. *Peter*'s Victory over *Simon*, when disputing together concerning the Unity of God, *the Apostle put that Heretick to silence*, as the Author of the *Constitutions* speaks; *Lib. 6. c. 8.* That pompous Description signifying nothing more, than that the Evangelical Simplicity concerning the Unity of God, prevail'd and triumph'd over the too swelling Philosophy of *Simon*, who held divers Persons in one God.

But to proceed: Another fam'd Doctrine of Antiquity is that of the Preexistence of Souls. Somebody explaining those *Words* of *Moses*, that *the Sons of God came in unto the Daughters of Men*, turn'd that Text into an Allegory, and interpreted it of Souls delighting in being united to Human Bodies. But because he, expressing himself theologically, called the Sons of God *Angels*, that Word deceived many *Platonist* Fathers, who took it literally. And thence came that so absurd, yet at the same time so generally receiv'd Opinion, that the Angels had Commerce with Women, and that from those monstrous Copulations proceeded Giants. *Origen* in his 50*th* Book against *Celsus*, teacheth us the Mystery of that Allegorical Copulation. "Some "body, says he, (meaning *Philo*, *de Gi-* "*gant.*) has apply'd that Text of *Moses* "to incorporeal Souls, which he meta- "phorically calls the Daughters of Men. It may be the other Fathers were not ignorant of this spiritual Sense, but they follow'd their manner of philosophizing, which was to speak always in such terms as kept the Allegory conceal'd, in order to give the more mysterious Air to what they said. They always supposed that the Wits of the first rank, for whom they wrote, knew the Secret of it; and as to the Vulgar, their aim was to conceal it from them.

After what has been said, how shall we know but that they affected the giving an appearance of a real and literal Doctrine to all they have deliver'd to us concerning the *Word*? And whether they have not designedly conceal'd from us the Secret of the Allegory, that they might by that majestick Out-side draw the more admiration and respect from the common People, who love what's wondrous. The Distinctions which *Origen* so often makes between *intelligible* and *sensible*, between *Contemplation* and *Faith*, between the *Word-God*, which is the Object of *seraphick Minds*, and the *incarnate* and *crucified Word*, the Object of vulgar Minds; I say, these Distinctions, and some others of like nature, scarce leave room

doubt of it. And indeed he may be confident of it, who conſiders what the ſame *Origen* ſays (*ubi ſupra.*) " By the " ſecond God, ſays he, Δεύτερον Θεὸν, " we mean no other than a *Power* which " comprehends all other *Powers*; a *Word*, " or *Reaſon*, which contains all other " *Reaſons*: and we ſay that that *Reaſon* " is particularly united to the Soul of " *Jeſus Chriſt*, becauſe that only is ca- " pable of receiving the *Word* it ſelf, " *Wiſdom* it ſelf, *Juſtice* it ſelf (αὐτο- " λόγῳ, αὐτοσοφίᾳ, &c.) And elſe- where he teaches us, " That the *Word* " was join'd to the Soul of *Jeſus Chriſt*, " even before the Incarnation, that Soul " having merited to be join'd to it " (*ib. l.* 4.) That ſo *that Soul*, or *that* " *Word* (for he uſes thoſe two Words " indifferently) did, for our ſakes, de- " ſcend on Earth, there to ſuffer Death " for us Mortals. Again (*Comment. in* " *Joan. Tom.* 20.) " That this Soul, " which was before in God in its Per- " fection and Fulneſs, was by God ſent " into the Womb of *Mary*, there to " take a Body; other leſs perfect Souls " not having had the ſame Honour. If to this be added his affirming in the 1*ſt* and 2*d* Tome on the ſame Goſpel, " That " 'tis only the *uttered Word*, which ac- cording to him can be no other than the Soul of *Jeſus Chriſt*; " That, I ſay, " only this *Word*, and not the *Word-God* " was incarnate; it cannot be doubted but that by this Soul *ſent*, *deſcended* and *incarnate*, he means the ſame thing which he and others ſay, when they ſpeak of a *Word ſent*, *deſcended* and *incarnate*. And what can this *Reaſon* be which it merited, and which was united to it? When the Veil of Allegory is taken off, it can be no other than that high Contem- plation, whereof the Soul of *Jeſus Chriſt* had by its pre-exiſtent Obedience render'd it ſelf capable; or than that degree of Prophecy, and that Spirit without meaſure, wherewith God had honoured it, and which made it Partaker of the Divine Nature; or laſtly, the very Office of *Word* or of *Interpreter* of God, whereof God had judged it wor- thy, as the moſt perfect and nobleſt of the Spirits, which he had decreed to de- clare his Mind. " *Celſus*, ſays he, " (*ibid. lib.* 7.) will not own that he who " ſuffer'd Death can be worthy of the " ſecond Honours next to the Supreme " God, as well becauſe of the Powers " he had acquir'd in Heaven, as becauſe of " thoſe he had acquir'd on Earth. Sup- poſing, as you ſee, that *Jeſus Chriſt* had merited in Heaven before he came to me- rit on our Earth, he was very far from believing him to be the moſt High God.

Wherefore, *Origen* having ſaid of the *Word*, that it *was in God*, that it *came from God*, that it was *made Fleſh*; and af- firming the ſame of the Soul of *J. C.* this Conformity yields juſt reaſon to ſuſpect, that the Doctrine of the *Word* is nothing but the *Soul* of *Jeſus Chriſt* theologiz'd, whereon they diſcours'd Allegorically. That's in a manner prov'd by the Hypo- theſis of the *Arians*, who believ'd that the *Word* was to *Jeſus Chriſt* inſtead of a Soul; and conſequently by the *Word* un- derſtood only the Soul of *Jeſus Chriſt* created before all Ages: An Hypotheſis renew'd in our time by *John Turner*, who has given it a new turn; for he maintains, " That the *Word* is nothing elſe but the " *Soul* of *Jeſus Chriſt*, created indeed, " but eternally united to the Subſtance " of God, and by that Union partici- " pating all his Perfections. *A Diſcourſe concerning the Meſſiah*, Ep. Dedic. p. 154.

The ſame is infer'd from the Uſe which has been made of ſome Texts of Scrip- ture; as, for example, theſe: *I came from the Father. O Father, glorify me with the Glory which I had with thee*, &c. *Who being in the Form of God*, &c. Our Divines interpret them of the Pre-exiſt- ence of the *Word*; but *Origen*, and Dr. *Ruth*, in his Book intitul'd, *Origen and his chief Opinions*, interpret them of the Pre-exiſtence of the Soul of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Whence comes this Confuſion of Ideas? The reaſon of it is eaſily given: The former

former of theſe Interpretations is myſterious and allegorical, and the latter literal. So we may conclude that the Fathers allegoriz'd on the pre-exiſtent Soul of *Jeſus Chriſt*, loving our Nature, and becoming incarnate for our Salvation; which they in their allegorical Stile, call'd the *Word*, or the *Son of God*. And conſequently, thoſe who take this laſt Allegory in the literal Senſe, and underſtand it of a Divine Perſon united to our Fleſh, are not leſs ridiculous than they who, ſtumbling at the Letter of the firſt Allegory, really believ'd that Angels had mix'd themſelves with mortal Women. The Text for the firſt Hypotheſis, that the *Sons of God were married to the Daughters of Men*, ſerves as well as that for the ſecond, *I have begotten thee before the Morning*.

This Pre-exiſtence of Souls, and particularly of that of *Jeſus Chriſt*, has been very antient in the Church. We find it plainly enough expreſs'd in the ſecond Letter attributed to *Clemens Romanus*, *C.* 10. Theſe are his Words: "As you have been call'd (dwelling) in "the Fleſh, ſo you will come in the "Fleſh. *Jeſus Chriſt* the Lord, who "ſav'd us, being the firſt Spirit (ὢν μὲν "τὸ πρῶτον πνεῦμα) was made Fleſh, "and ſo called us: Likewiſe we ſhall re-"ceive the Recompence in the Fleſh. This Paſſage ſuppoſes the Pre-exiſtence of our Souls, as well as that of the Soul of *Jeſus Chriſt*: For he compares our Spirits exiſting in the Fleſh, to that firſt Spirit which was made Fleſh to call us. He calls *Jeſus Chriſt* the *firſt* of all Spirits, whether Souls or Angels, becauſe God begat him firſt a little before he undertook the Creation of the World, and afterwards imploy'd him to create the other Spirits, according to the Doctrine of *Lactantius* (*Inſtit. lib.* 4. *c.* 6.) who further teaches us (*ibid. c.* 12.) That this Holy Spirit deſcending from Heaven, choſe the Womb of a Virgin to enter into. And the better to carry on the Compariſon which he makes of that Spirit to all incarnate Spirits, he ſhews that *h* was rais'd to the Recompence only by his faithful Obedience and Vertue (*ibid. cap.* 14.) His Words are remarkable; "God, ſays he, having "ſent his Son to Men ——— He "hath ſhewn his Faithfulneſs in teach-"ing, that there is but one God, and "that he only is to be worſhip'd: and "he never call'd himſelf God, becauſe "he would have violated his Truth, if "being ſent to take away from the "World the Plurality of Gods, and to "eſtabliſh the Unity of God, he had "introduc'd more than one God. That "had not been preaching One God, "nor working for the Intereſt of him "who ſent him, but for his own; and "it would have been dividing himſelf "from the Father, whom he came to "glorify. Then by his having been "thus faithful, and in the Deſign of "diſcharging his Commiſſion not at-"tributing any thing to himſelf; he has "receiv'd the Dignity of everlaſting "High-Prieſt, the Honour of Supreme "King, the Power of Judg, and the "Name of God. By the way, theſe Words of this Father are a curious Paraphraſe on thoſe of St. *Paul*, Phil. 2. 6, &c. *Who being in the Form of God, did not attribute to himſelf*, &c. *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a Name which is above every Name*, &c.

Let us here remember a diſtinction of the Fathers, which has been mention'd already, and wherein the Footſteps of antient Allegory viſibly appear. The Fathers diſtinguiſh'd two kinds of Generation of the *Word*, the one eternal and *internal*, and the other *external*, which began with the World, and the only one which they properly call Generation. Dr. *Bull* acknowledgeth this diſtinction; only he pretends (but without reaſon) that 'tis the latter which is *metaphorical*. Granting him his deſire, 'tis the ſame thing with reſpect to the Queſtion now treated of: For it remains nevertheleſs

true, that they allegoriz'd on one of the Generations of the *Word*, be it which it will, and that's all I need. Let them, as long as they please, say that the Fathers spake of a *Generation* of the *Word*, which was proper and literal: I shall answer, Yes, and that's what I call gross *Platonism*, which has made them philosophize so absurdly. But by their own confession, the same Fathers have spoken of another Generation of the *Word*, which is *metaphorical* and *allegorical*, and that's what I call their refin'd *Platonism*, the fair Remains of sound Philosophy; which betrays them, and manifestly discovers the absurdity of the other part of their System, whereon they have innovated.

He must know little of *Plato*, who can believe that he could fall into so dull a Philosophy, as that God did from all Eternity necessarily beget a Son, a second God, putting him forth out of himself, with his proper Hypostasis, which distinguisheth him from the Father; and that he made use of him to create the World; unless 'twere perhaps to deceive the vulgar People. But that God did voluntarily conceive a Design of creating the World; that he did actually create it by his efficacious Word; that that Word is his Son in an allegorical Sense, because it was emanated from the Divine Understanding; that it was in an allegorical sense the Creator, because it was the Means and Instrument which the Wisdom of God made use of to give Life and Being to all things: Then indeed I own literally *Moses* saying, that *God spake, and the Creature obey'd*: then I shall own *Plato*'s Allegory telling me the same thing with *Moses*, but in the Stile of the Religion wherein he was born: Then, to conclude, I own the good Divinity of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who assures me that the *Word* of the Father is not that which was begotten, but supreme Goodness, profound Wisdom, and infinite Power manifesting it self in the Work of this Universe. This is, without doubt, the true way of understanding *Plato* and we have [illegible] as our Warrant for [illegible] (*Lib. Anti*[illegible] that Great Man [illegible] that we can [illegible] we do not [illegible] allegorically.

Good *Platonist*, like the Author of the *Recognitions*, discovers to us the Origin of this allegorical Philosophy, by saying, "That from the first Will pro-"ceeded another Will, and from this "the World, (*Lib.* 1. *c.* 24.) That is to say, that from the *first* eternal and internally begotten *Will*, proceeded at the beginning of all things, a *second Will*, externally begotten, an expres Command, which spoken, all things were made. And this *second Will* is metaphorically the *Son*, because proceeding from God himself, and from the Invisibility which is proper to his Nature, it is a kind of Generation producing his Image; every Manifestation being the Image of God. *Irenæus* is also another of the good *Platonists* who allegoriz'd. In many places of his Treatise against Heresies, he supposes God not to have needed any more than his two Hands to create the World. There's no difficulty in perceiving his intention thro those Words. Whereas the Hereticks maintain'd that all was made by Angels, and that those Spirits had created the World: *Irenæus* in opposing that Doctrine, flies into the opposite extreme, *viz.* That God, who had no need of Angels, made use of no more than his two Hands, his *Word* and his *Spirit*, to do all things; not that by those two Powers he understood two *Hypostases*, but only personaliz'd them in opposition to the *Æons*, or to the *Gnosticks* Angels, which were esteemed Persons. And he meant nothing more than that God needed not any other than himself (as he explains himself in the 19*th* Chapter of his first Book) and in no wise any Power separate from him, having an Hypostasis distinct

distinct from his: This God, says he, is the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. ——What do these words signify, That God needed no other than himself, if not that God had no need of any more than his Command and Power to operate what he will'd? Now this Command and this Power are not two *Hypostases* separate and distinct from his (which was the Opinion of those Hereticks) but two Powers, which he imploy'd as his two Hands: Either let's blind our selves, or see Allegory in all this. Again, it's by a common Figure, that the Name, the Qualities, and even the Personality of the thing which ceaseth to be, or which is rejected, is given to that which takes its place, tho it be of a different nature. God rejecting Sacrifices, gives the name of Sacrifice to the Obedience which he accepts. "There "is nothing more natural (says Dr. *A.* "in his Manuscript concerning the Satisfaction) than to give to a thing which "supplies the place of another, and "which procures all the fruits of it, "the Name of that instead whereof it "is substituted. St. *Paul* observ'd this "Rule in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*: "If he gave the Name of Sacrifice to "the Obedience of *Jesus Christ*, it was "to suite his Expressions to the Ideas "which prevail'd under the antient Dispensation, wherein the principal Acts "of Piety consisted in Sacrifices; he applied those antient Sacrifices to the "Death of *Jesus Christ*, without intending any other Mystery in it.

Whereto may be added, that *Jesus Christ* speaking of the *Holy Ghost*, who was to teach the Truth by his Inspirations, as he himself had taught it by Preaching, speaks of him as of a Teacher, as of a Person, because he was to supply the absence of a Teacher, and fill the place of a Person. So, as the *Gnosticks* spake of nothing but Angels who had created the World, and govern'd the antient People, and of Emanations and Generations from the Supreme Being: *Irenæus* answers, The true Angels which created the World, and taught the Prophets, are the *Word* of God and his *Spirit*; and that *Word* and *Spirit* are his true Emanations: So making of a Manifestation and of a Communication, God's Helpers, his Coadjuters in the Creation, his Ministers in the Government of the World; making, I say, so many *Hypostases* of the Godhead, of those Powers, because he substitutes them in lieu of the *Hypostases* rejected by him.

It is by the same method that *Theophilus* of *Antioch* made intirely allegorical Commentarys on the four Gospels. Thus he allegorizes the first words of St. *John*: "The *Beginning*, says he, that "is God: The *Word*, that is, the Son of "God, *Jesus Christ*, of whom the Voice "of the Father saith in the Psalm, *My "Heart hath uttered a good Word*, that "is to say, *Christ*, by whom all things "were made: *And without him nothing "was made*; *Nothing*, that is to say, an "*Idol*, which, as the Apostle saith, is no-"thing in the World. It is apparent by the Method of this Author, who designs the explaining the Gospels allegorically, and particularly by the allegorical Explanation he gives of the word *Beginning*, and of that of *Nothing*, that what he says of the *Word* is likewise allegorical. The *Word*, says he, is the Son of God, that is to say, the Christ, by whom all things were made. Is not that saying that it is the *Christ*, the Man whom God hath anointed, who is the *Son* and the *Word*, by whose Power all under the Gospel was made? even the *Idol*, which was made without him, having been destroy'd, and the World reform'd. Let us deal plainly, *Christ* is the *Word* only by virtue of an allegorical Sense, which considers him as a *second Word*, in as much as he is with respect to the spiritual World, what the *Word-God* was with respect to the sensible World.

It seems this allegorical Exposition of the *Word* of St. *John*, was not unknown

in the time of *Hyppolitus* : (*Homil. de Deo trino & uno contra Noetum*) For he raiſes an Objection to himſelf, which ſhews, that it was urg'd againſt the *Platonizers*. " But, ſays that Father, ſome " will ſay to me, You introduce Novel- " ties, when you call the *Word Son*. " St. *John* indeed ſpeaks of a *Word*, but " he underſtands it otherwiſe, and by " *Allegory*. *Hyppolitus* does not wholly reject this Expoſition, and afterwards anſwers, " That, in truth, the *Word* " was called *Son* from the beginning, " only becauſe it was afterwards to take " birth, and become a *Son* ; the *Word* of " it ſelf, and without Fleſh, not being " a perfect Son. Which ſhews, that according to him, the Word was nothing elſe but a Divine Operation, which was the Son but *improperly*, and by an *imperfect Generation*, before it was united to the Fleſh of *Chriſt*. One would think *Servetus* had copied *Hyppolitus*, (*lib.* 2. *p.* 90.) " Let us, ſays he, exactly fol- " low the Scripture-Stile, let us ſay the " *Word* where that ſays the *Word*, and " the *Son* where that ſays the *Son* : for- " merly the *Word*, now the *Son*—— " That if the *Word* was formerly the Son, " it is only becauſe it had the Form, and " was the Seed of the *Son* which was to " come.——I will then ſay, ſays he " in another place, the *Prolation* of the " *Word*, and the *Generation* of the *Son*.

One of our Biſhops does not ſeem to diſlike the ſo explaining the word *Son*, with reſpect to the Son of *Mary*, rather than with reſpect to the *Begotten-Word*. Thus he ſpeaks (2d *Diſcourſe to the Clergy*, *p.* 99.) " Many have thought that the " Term *Son* did not belong to the *Bleſſed* " *Three*, but only to our Saviour, as he " was the *Meſſiah* ; the *Jews* having had " that Notion of the *Meſſiah*, that as he " was to be the King of *Iſrael*, ſo he " was to be the *Son of God*.——Now " ſome Criticks do apprehend, that " ſince in many places the term *Son of* " *God*, has manifeſtly a relation to Chriſt, " as the *Meſſiah* ; there is in this an- " Uniformity in the whole Scripture- " Stile ; ſo that every where by the Phraſe " *Son of God*, we are to underſtand " *Jeſus* as the *Meſſiah*.——But that " the Divine Principle that was in him, " is in the ſtrictneſs of Speech to be cal- " led, as St. *John* does, the *Word*. So " that by this, if true, all the Specula- " tions concerning an *Eternal Generation*, " are cut off in the ſtrict ſenſe of the " Words ; tho in a larger Senſe every " *Emanation*, of what ſort ſoever, may " be ſo call'd.

Whence appears how vain Dr. *Bull*'s Endeavours are (*Judic. Eccleſ.*) to prove that the four ſorts of *Filiation* alledg'd by the *Socinians* to fill the Signification of the Term *Son of God*, are not ſufficient. The conſtant Phraſeology of the New Teſtament ruins his Pretence ; while not one of thoſe Expreſſions, *Son of God*, is applicable to an *eternal Generation*. And that alſo ſhews that the Term λόγος cannot be otherwiſe refer'd than to that Divine Operation which over-ſhadowed the *Bleſſed Virgin*, and to that effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which conſecrated *Jeſus Chriſt* in his Office of *Meſſiah*. And this powerful Virtue can be no other than an *allegorical Son*, as it is a Divine *Emanation*, and every *Emanation* an improper and figurative *Generation*. It's to little purpoſe that Dr. *Bull*, with the *Mahometans*, objects to us, " That in *Chriſt*'s " being born of a Virgin, or aſcended " into Heaven, there is nothing which " diſtinguiſhes him from the firſt Man, " who was made by the Hand of God, " nor from *Enoch* who was taken up into " Heaven. We anſwer with *Bartholo-mew* of *Edeſſa* (*Confut. Agaren.*) " What " a pitiful Argument that is ! If *Adam* " may be compar'd to *Jeſus Chriſt*, " becauſe he was made by God's own " hand, without Man's operation, it " will thence follow that the firſt *Aſs* " and the firſt *Dog* may be compared " to *Adam* and to *Chriſt* ; and that they " are not of a leſs excellent nature, be- " cauſe they were immediately created

" as

" as well as *Adam* and *J. C.* This Author gives us to understand, that what distinguishes *Adam* from other Animals, or *J. Christ* from *Adam* himself, is not so much the Miracle of their Birth, which seems to be every way equal, as the excellency of those Gifts, which they more or less receiv'd by that extraordinary Birth: And those degrees of Excellence are shewn by the *Breath of God* in *Adam*'s Nostrils, and by the Operation of the *Holy Ghost* in the Conception of *Jesus Christ*: That *Divine Breath* raising *Adam* above all other Animals; and the *Holy Ghost* being doubtless something more noble than that *Breath*, hath raised *Jesus Christ* above the first Man, and made him the *Son of God* in a more proper and more peculiar manner. So we are likewise to argue on the Exaltation of *Jesus Christ*, and shew that it raises him infinitely above *Enoch*, not by the mere Miracle of raising him to Heaven, but by the Sovereign Power which was then communicated to him.

What shall we say of *Origen*? We might copy his whole Works. Read only his first *Tome* on St. *John*, where he strongly disputes against the *Valentinians*, 1. In shewing them, that since they expound the other Names given to our Saviour, as the *Life*, the *Truth*, and the *Light*, &c. *anagogically* and *allegorically* (they are his own Terms) it is but reasonable that they keep to the same Rule in interpreting the Name of *Word*, and give it an allegorical and figurative Sense. " 'Tis not reasonable, says he to them, " that you will not expound the Term " *Word* in a metaphorical Sense, while " you allegorically explain that other " Phrase, *the Light of the World.* —— " Therefore since *Jesus Christ* is ca'l'd " the *Light*, because of his Work or " Office, which is to enlighten the " World, it follows that he is also call'd " the *Word*, because of his *Work*, which " is to cure us of our Errors and Follies, to prepare us to act conformably " to Truth and Reason. Nothing can be more just than this Observation of *Origen*: St. *John*'s Stile is altogether Oriental, full of harsh Metaphors, hyperbolical Expressions, and very peculiar manners of speaking. 'Tis however impossible for one freed from Prejudices to mistake them. How? Why, every Man whose Head's not fill'd with mad *Platonism*, will not look for more Mystery in the Term *Word*, than in those of *Light*, *Way*, *Life* and *Truth*, &c. Titles which the Evangelist no less attributes to *Jesus Christ* than the former. Indeed if this Divine Saviour is the *Light* and the *Truth*, because he is the bearer of a Doctrine which dissipates our Darkness and Errors; if he is the *Way* and the *Life*, because he opens to us the way of attaining everlasting Happiness: why may we not argue in the same manner on this other Term *Word*? And why should we not say that *J. Christ* is so called, because he is the Bearer of the Word of God by way of Excellence, and the Interpreter of his most-authentick Truths?

2. *Origen* endeavours to take from the *Valentinians* two Passages in the 33*d* and 45*th* Psalms, which they made use of to prove that the term *Word* had no other Signification than that of *Prolation*, properly so called. For he supposes that these Words, *My Heart hath utter'd a good Word*, do not signify such a *Prolation*, a proper and literal Generation, but a *metaphorical Prolation*: and that from this reason, that the word *Heart* in this Text being figurative, the term *Word* must also be figurative. And that we may the better apprehend how far *Origen* carrys the Figure of this Word, the other Text which he quotes from the *Psalms*, so fully clears the matter, as to leave no room for cavilling. " The *Valentinians*, says he, believe that these " Words, *The Heavens were created by* " *the Word of God, and by the Spirit of* " *his Mouth*, were said of our *Saviour* " and of the *Holy Ghost*; tho it be cer- " tain that one may give them this other " Sense, That the Heavens were esta-

" blish'd

" bliſh'd by Divine Reaſon and Wiſdom " (*ratione Dei*) as we ſay that a Houſe " was built by that Skill which is the " Art of building Houſes. I leave the Reader to judg whether an *Unitarian* could more plainly remove all the Idea of *Hypoſtaſis* from our Minds. Therefore when the ſame *Origen* does elſewhere argue concerning the *Word*, as if he himſelf believ'd it an *Hypoſtaſis*, his ſo ſpeaking was according to the Principles of the *Greek* Philoſophy. For, as *Porphyry* rightly obſerves, *Origen* having continually apply'd himſelf to reading the Writings of the *Platoniſts* and the *Pythagoreans*, and having therein learnt the allegorical way of thoſe Philoſophers expounding the Myſteries of the *Greeks*, made uſe of it himſelf in his Interpretation of the Scriptures (*apud Euſeb. l. 6. c. 19.*) See likewiſe *Bibl. univ. T. 6. p. 50.* That declared Enemy of the Chriſtian Religion is not the only Perſon who has given that judgment of *Origen*: Mr. *Huet* does not treat him more favourably in his *Origeniana*, *l. 2. c. 2.* " *Origen*, ſays he, was " one of *Plato*'s greateſt Admirers, inſomuch, that inſtead of ſuting the " *Platonick* Tenents to the Chriſtian " Doctrine, he regulated the Doctrine " of Chriſtianity by the Dogma of the " *Platoniſts*. And a little lower he adds, " That *Origen* had been carry'd to " thoſe Exceſſes by the example of his " Preceptor *Clemens Alexand.* who us'd " to embeliſh the Religion of *Jeſus Chriſt* with the Academick Paint.

Can any one think that *Juſtin* did not diſcourſe by the Principles of this *Allegorical* Philoſophy, when in his ſecond Apology he calls the Reaſon which is in Man, a Part and Seed, μέρος καὶ σπέρμα, *of the Divine Word?* The Divine Word is in his ſenſe, only that univerſal Reaſon, that Source and Fulneſs of Wiſdom which reſides in the Divine Underſtanding, whereof ours is a Stream and a part. Is our Reaſon an Hypoſtaſis diſtinct from Man? How ſhall we then imagine that this Father ever intended to ſay that Divine Reaſon is an *Hypoſtaſis* diſtinct from God? I may very well ſay that my Reaſon has taught me ſuch a thing, and that I conſulted my Reaſon, without ſuppoſing my Reaſon to be any other Perſon than my ſelf. Then why may we not ſay God made uſe of his Reaſon to create this Univerſe, that his Reaſon was his Counſellor and his Miniſter, without making a ſecond Perſon of his Reaſon? Certainly my Reaſon cannot be perſonalized, any otherwiſe than by the Power of Allegory, neither can that of God be any otherwiſe. Nay, it may be that *Juſtin* ſtrain'd his Allegory yet farther; and that he intended to ſay, that Reaſon, or the univerſal Seed, is no other than the Goſpel; which is not a part of the Seed, as the Precepts of Reaſon which enlighten'd the Philoſophers are, but the fulneſs of that incorruptible Seed which regenerates the Heart.

I will produce another Example of this allegorical way of interpreting the Scripture. St. *Cyprian* explaining that famous Paſſage of St. *John* (1 Ep. 5. 8.) concerning the three Witneſſes on Earth, the *Spirit*, the *Water*, and the *Blood*, has ſpoken of them, as of the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, which are the three Witneſſes in Heaven, now found in our Bibles, but were not there in the days of that Father. Some, as *Fulgentius*, having confounded St. *Cyprian*'s Diſcourſe with the Sacred Text, did not doubt but that Holy Martyr had ſpoken literally, and as words of the Scripture, what he ſaid only in Allegory; not obſerving, that what he aſſerted of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, is a ſpiritual Senſe which he had drawn from the Three Witneſſes on Earth; as if the *Spirit* were the *Father*, the *Blood* the *Son*, and the *Water* the *Holy Ghoſt*. But *Facundus* did not ſuffer himſelf to be at all deceiv'd by it, for he informs us (*Defenſ. Trinit. Capit. l. 1. c. 3.*) " That " St. *Cyprian* will have that to be under- " ſtood of the *Father*, the *Son*, and " the

" the *Holy Ghost*, which St. *John* said of " the *Spirit*, *Water* and *Blood*; which can be only an allegorical Interpretation. And that Allegory was followed by St. *Augustin* (*contra Maxim. lib.* 3. *c.* 12.) where he expressly says, " That the *Spi-* " *rit*, the *Water* and the *Blood*, are the " *Sacrament* of the *Father*, the *Son*, and " the *Holy Ghost*. What's the meaning of the *Sacrament?* if it be not the Mystery and Allegory. Now, I pray, who can warrant me that the Fathers, who so strained the Allegory on the three Witnesses on Earth, to find the Trinity therein, have not also strained it on the *Word* of St. *John*, to find in it their Favourite Doctrine, *Plato*'s second God? If they misapplyed these Words, *My Heart hath uttered a Good Word*, and these *I have begotten thee in my Bosom before Aurora*; how can I be assur'd that they have not deceived me, or that their Infatuation for *Plato* has not deceived themselves, when they Platonically interpret those other Places, where it is said, *That the Word was God*, and *that the Word was made Flesh?*

However that be, it must be granted me, That the Fathers made no difficulty of seeking sublime senses in the Scriptures, and of raising themselves up very high above its plain and natural meaning. That appears by the use St. *Cyprian* and St. *Augustin* made of the Epistle General of St. *John*. Now the same Fathers having expressed their Allegories in too absolute Terms, without characterizing them by some Mark, whereby they might be distinguished from a proper and literal sense, it has in succeeding time happened that the literal sense of what they said has been followed. We have seen it in the Example of St. *Cyprian*, that Father expressing himself absolutely: " It is written, says he, of the *Father*, " of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*, " *And these three are one.* Now that was written only of the *Spirit*, the *Water* and the *Blood*. Then the Allegorical Exposition has been taken for an express Text of Scripture. I strongly suspect that the same thing has happen'd to that noted Text of St. *Paul* (1 *Tim. c.* 3. *v.* 16.) *The Mystery of Godliness is great, God manifested in the Flesh.* It's well known, that the Latin Church has always read, *which* was manifested in the Flesh. We may be well assured, that the whole *Greek* Church did not read otherwise, by *Gelazius* of *Cizicus*'s putting this Reading into the Mouths of the Fathers of the *Nicene* Council. He says, that *Macarius* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, answering the Argument of a Philosopher, cited this Passage of St. *Paul*. But how? In the same manner as we read it in the *Vulgar Latin*, *The Mystery of Godliness is great, which was manifested in the Flesh* (ὃ ἐφανερώθη) But that Father not fully satisfied with the Letter of the Text, added this Gloss, that is to say, *The Son of God*, a perfectly Spiritual Exposition, which being since slid into the Text, gave birth to our present Reading, *God manifested in the Flesh.* And here an Allegorical Exposition is again taken for an express Text of Scripture.

It is the same with the *Word*: some one having allegorized, according to the Custom of that time, on the Words of *Moses*, *And God said*, or on those of the Psalmist, *My Heart hath uttered a good Word*, or on those of St. *John*, *In the beginning was the Word*, &c. and having expressed his Allegory in too absolute Terms, there needed no more to Men prepossessed with false Platonism, to make them regard such an allegorical Exposition as the Doctrine of the Church. The same thing that happen'd among the Heretics, has also fallen out among those who call themselves Orthodox. And we need not wonder that the same *Platonism*, which both the one and the other made profession of, cast them both into the same Wandrings. This is what I mean, and my Conjecture comes near to Demonstration. We have seen that *Valentine* a great Sectary of *Plato*, having al-

allegoriz'd on Divine Ideas and Diſpenſations, and having ſpoken of them under the Fiction of as many Perſons, his Diſciples not underſtanding his Allegory, made Perſonal Subſtances of thoſe feigned Perſons. If *Valentine*'s Followers miſunderſtood the ſenſe of their Maſter, can we doubt but that the ſame thing happened to the *Platoniſt* Fathers, in their miſapprehending the allegorical way of philoſophizing uſed by their Predeceſſors, and in converting mere Divine Manifeſtations into Perſonal Subſtances? For my part I do not at all doubt of their having imitated each other. The Doctors of both ſides had at the ſame time the ſame *Ideas*, *viz.* the Principles of refin'd *Platoniſm*, delighting in Allegory and the Fiction of Perſons: And the Diſciples of each Party at the ſame time chang'd their Maſters Ideas, and fell into groſs *Platoniſm*, which finds *Hypoſtaſes* in every thing. Whatever Party Men happened to be ingag'd in, they rarely miſs following the then prevailing Philoſophy, and ſuting themſelves to the Humour and Genius of that Age. When Allegory was in vogue, all as well Orthodox as Heretick allegoriz'd, each with reference to his own Syſtem, ſome under the Fiction of *Three Æons*, and others under that of Thirty. So alſo when *groſs Platoniſm* had prevailed, all delighted in *Hypoſtaſes*, and follow'd the Philoſophy in faſhion. 'Tis the Fate of *Hypoſtaſes*, the Humour of the Age regulates them. Thus *refined Platoniſm* degenerated into *groſs Platoniſm*, and allegorical Expoſitions into a groſs literal Senſe. It often happening, that Diſciples much miſunderſtand their Maſters, or go further than they to ſay ſomething new. But, to conclude, which way ſoever Innovation begins, it paſſes in very little time from Sect to Sect; Heathens, Hereticks, Orthodox, all embrace the new Method. Their Doctrines are different, but their manner of philoſophizing on thoſe Doctrines is alike and uniform. Perhaps they may not agree in the Nature of what they call Principles, nor in their Names, Number or Order, nor on their Age or Excellence, nor in their other Qualities and Prerogatives: but however it be with theſe, they ſhall all agree that they are *Hypoſtaſes*, *Perſonal Subſtances*, becauſe the Philoſophy of the Age requires it.

CHAP. XIX.

A Digreſſion concerning the pretended unalterable Faith of the Church.

'TIS pretended that the Church is ſo faithful a Guardian of *the Tradition*, that it cannot be liable to theſe ſorts of Changes. But one muſt have a ſlender Acquaintance with Antiquity, and leſs Experience of what happens every day, to deceive ones ſelf with ſo wretched an Anſwer. The Church is jealous of certain Terms, and ſhe is a faithful Repoſitory; that's agreed. But provided one does not meddle with the Terms, which ſhe holds ſacred and inviolable; one may change the Hypotheſes as much as one pleaſes, and they have been changed with Impunity, and without giving much Trouble *to the Church*. Dr. *Wallis* and Dr. *Sherlock* hold two Hypotheſes, directly oppoſite to one another; for the firſt urges ſo ſtrongly the *Unity* of God, that he loſes the *Trinity* of

of Persons; and the latter willing to maintain the *Trinity*, has quite lost the *Unity*. One of these two, no matter which, has changed *the Tradition*. Let the Church speak therefore, and declare herself if she can, for one of these Hypotheses. Let her condemn and anathematize the other; let her chastize the Authors of it, and cast them out of her Bosom. No, she will not do it, she is not concerned whither a false Hypothesis may lead her, provided it does not change her Terms which are Sacred, and her Favourites. For instance, suppose that it has always been believed hitherto, that three Persons signify but three Modes, or three Relations, or three Differences, *&c.* You may say notwithstanding, without fearing the *good Matron* will formally declare himself, that three Persons are no less than three Spirits and three Beings, provided you retain the Terms she uses in her Prayers, and say devoutly with her, *O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God, have Mercy upon us miserable Sinners.* The Reason is plainly this, she is very quick at hearing, if you pronounce these Words, *one God and three Persons.* But with what Modesty will she judg of the sense of those Terms, having no certain Idea for 'em? If instead of three Persons I say four or five, the Church will declare me an Heretick, this is all she can do. In short, whether these three Persons are *three Modes* or *three distinct Substances*, this is a Theology, too nice and curious for the Church's Decision; and as to this, she leaves all her Children to their Liberty of believing as they can. The Church has been always the same without doubt; she might condemn as Hereticks, those who reckoned thirty Persons or thirty Æons in the Divine Essence, as the *Gnosticks* did: But for others, who did but change three feigned and allegorical Persons, into three personal Substances; she has let them alone, or rather she has allowed them as her dear Children, to accommodate and sure her to the prevailing Philosophy, the better to draw into her Communion the grossest *Platonists*, who made a great Figure in the Schools.

Isaac Vossius in his second Letter to *Rivet* goes farther, and ventures to say, that *the Church* made no difficulty even of tolerating the *Valentinians*, that is, the Doctrine of them, *who held thirty Persons in the Deity*, and that she admitted them into her Communion. She had more Indulgence than I should have: "The first Christians, says *Vossius*, did "not presently cast Hereticks out of her "Communion, they came not to that Extremity; but did it when the Hereticks "went so far, as expressly to contradict "the Christian Faith. As to others, "who did but *alter* the Truths of the "Gospel, by mixing with them the "*Gentile* Fables, they dealt not so rigorously with them, but allow'd them "some kind of Liberty. He puts down *Valentinian* among these last; whence it follows, that if the thirty Æons of *that Heretick* were tolerated, there would have been no difficulty to admit of *three Hypostases*, instead of *three Attributes* or three Modes. These good Men thought it not amiss, to accommodate the Truths of the Gospel with the Fables of the Pagan Philosophers and Poets, but rather a Service to Religion. Hence it was, without doubt, that *Platonism*, which at first served her only for Ornament, at length became, under favour of this Toleration, the very Support of her Mysteries.

This brings to my remembrance a Remark of Monsr. *Le Clerc* in his Rules of Criticism (*Biblioth. Univ. Tom.* 10. *p.* 334.) which very well deserves our Reflection. "It has so fallen out, that "tho there have been always in use a"mong Christians some certain Terms, "yet they have insensibly departed "widely from *their* Ideas, which they "who first used the Terms fixed to "them: and tho the Words remain "the same, yet the Sense of them has

" passed thro divers Revolutions. The " Phrases or Expressions being, says he, " written in sensible Characters in a " great many Books, could not suffer " any great Alteration: but the Ideas " (first belonging to those Expressions) " being things not to be seen with ones " Eyes; and their Rise and Disappear- " ance, and their several Changes, being " all secret things within the Mind of " every Man, and invisible to every " body else; 'tis hard to guess what " has happened, by the means of equi- " vocal Sound. One sees on a Theater " the Actors come forth from behind the " Curtains in certain Habits; may one " therefore conclude, that always when " one sees the same Habits, they are the " same Actors who have them on? 'Tis " the same with Thoughts, and the " Words wherein they are dressed.

In these Words you have an account as it were, of the Comedy our *Trinitarians* act at this day. They put on all the Dresses of the Church, and say with her, *Holy Blessed and Glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God.* But does it follow therefore, that under the same Words they conceive the same Ideas; or that they are the same Actors always, when seen in the same Habits? Not at all. Some are *Sabellians*, others are *Rigid*, and others are *moderate Trinitarians*; and all together have Ideas so confus'd, and so contrary to one another, that it may be one should not be much mistaken, if one said that this Expression [three Persons] in their Mouths has as many senses, as there are Divines who pronounce 'em; if it be true that they fix any meaning to them, and that they form any Ideas about them. So that, altho the *Platonists* and the *Christians* have used these Terms, yet it does not follow thereupon that they had the same Ideas, nor that the *Platonists* had the same among themselves; nor that all Christians among themselves, in all Times and Places, affix'd to the same Terms one constant, uniform Signification. The present Time sufficiently shews us what one ought to judg of the past: The *Terms* have been always the same, but they are only sensible Objects that are not liable to change; but the Meaning and the Ideas being things invisible, which pass within the Mind, they may be, and are changed without being perceived. To conclude, I make this Reflection only with regard to metaphysical Terms, whereof we have but unsteady and confus'd Ideas, and by consequence they are liable to very great Alterations. As these Ideas do not enter into our Minds without difficulty, so they are not maintained there with a little Pains; sooner or later they vanish, and after all, they cannot pass from the Master's Mouth to the Scholar's Ear without some Revolutions: The Unity of God is one thing with a *Jew*, and another with the *Trinitarian*. The Term [Consubstantial] with the *Samosatenians* carrys a different Idea with it in the Mind from that of the *Nicene* Fathers. Three Hypostases have one sense with the *Platonists*, and another with the *Athanasians*, one with the Followers of *Arius*, and another among *Us*.

And certainly the Fathers of the *Council* of *Alexandria*, had reason to give this Advice to them at *Antioch*, in the Letter they writ to them. (*apud Athan. vid. Dupin. Tom. 2. p. 138.*) " That they " should not differ among themselves a- " bout the Hypostases, since they who " owned three in the Trinity, and they " who allowed of no more than one, " are both of the same Opinion, and " differed only in the manner of their " Expression. We understand well e- nough what this means, the metaphysical Terms are capable of the most contradictory senses; one may make them, as we make the Clock, strike what we please. If you own three Hypostases, you are Orthodox; if you acknowledg but one, you are still so nevertheless. This Term is a sort of *Proteus*, that takes in all senses. In some mens mouths it signifies *the manner of subsisting*, and then

then 'tis *three*; with others it signifies *Substance*, and then 'tis but *one*. You see here both are found to be of the same mind before they are aware. Alas! I really think that I and the Church shall be of the same mind too, if when she owns *one Essence and three Persons*, I should say on the contrary *one Person and three Essences*; we mean the same thing it may be. We express our selves indeed differently, but after all we shall agree at the bottom; 'twill always be *three somewhats* in *one I know not what*, for that's all that the Terms [*Essence* and *Persons*] signify in the Mouths of *Trinitarians*. But Raillery apart, who would not pity St. *Jerom*, who takes so much pains (*Epist. ad Damasum*) to enquire whether he should say *one Hypostasis* or *three Hypostases*? What! Learned Doctor, must the Pope be consulted about that? Say what you please, for you may with a very safe Conscience. St. *Austin* much better understood the sense of his Party, as to the Word Person (*de Trinit. lib. 5. cap. 9.*) "When, says he, 'tis "asked what the Three are, human Lan- "guage is scanty, and affords not Terms "to express it; 'tis therefore answer'd "*three Persons*, not as if that was some- "what to the purpose, but something "must be said, and one must not be si- "lent [to the Question.]

As for Terms which express things that fall under our Senses or Actions, whereof we have a distinct and perfect Idea, it falls out quite otherwise; they may change or vary, and the things we make them to signify may not vary at all in our Minds, or suffer the least Alteration. The Facts, for instance, mention'd in the Apostles Creed, are things of that nature, the Ideas whereof are preserv'd without any Change. As its Articles are plain, few in Number, without any Speculations, and contain only the Primitive Doctrines of Christianity; it was easy therefore to preserve the sense, and to have always a true Knowledg of them: 'Tis a Faith, as I may say, that's born with us, that offers it self to our Understandings from the Moment we enter into the Church, that is, in the Mouth and Heart of every Christian; and there is no need of ascending into Heaven, of consulting Councils, nor of descending into the Deeps to know it, and employing Missions of Dragoons to impose the Belief of it. Wherefore *Cyril* in *Catech. 5. Ruffinus in Expos. Symbol. Jerom in Epist. 61. ad Pammach. c. 9. Hilarius de Synod.* had good reason to say, "That "the Creed was not [only] written "upon Paper, but upon the Tables of "the Heart, and in the Mind of Man. Expressions that *Jeremy* and St. *Paul* make use of about the Precepts of the Gospel, to signify, that there's no need of a Teacher to learn them, because Reason is capable of suggesting them, and Memory of retaining them. The Passage of St. *Hilary* is the more remarkable, because he makes an express Opposition between *this* Faith graven upon the *Heart*, and *that* which is only in the *Letter* and the *Writings of Men*: For he congratulates the *Western* Bishops, for their maintaining the Apostolic Faith, for the Spirit wherewith they were animated, and that they knew not the Forms of Faith which were written by Mens Hands. The Spirit here does not signify the Holy Ghost, as Mons. *Du Pin* supposes, but the *Spiritual Sense* in opposition to the *Literal*. Which shews, that there was no need of writing down the Apostles Creed, in the first Ages of the Church. Every one had the sense of it in his Mind: As it was short and plain, and consisting only of the principal Facts and Primitive Truths, which constitute the very Essence and Spirit of the Christian Religion; it was easy for the most illiterate to keep it in mind, as to the Substance of it; for the rest every one expressed himself as he pleased. Hence it was, that 'twas very late before any Formula was drawn up, and that too with some difference in the Terms and Number of Articles, particularly

ularly in those which seem to explain one another. It ought not to be wondred at after this, if it be not found among the antient Doctors, to be just as we have it at this day. They received it only by Tradition, and worded it upon occasion every one in his own way: "The Christians, says *Dupin* (*Tom.* 1. "*p.* 30.) had this Faith so ready in their "Minds, that they did not stick to any "certain Form; hence came the difference (in point of Form) of the "Creeds mentioned by the Fathers.

Moreover, it must not be supposed, that when some particular Christians came at length to enlarge the Apostles Creed, by their *Platonic* Speculations, the People entered into those Notions and Philosophical Ideas. They always kept themselves to that Simplicity of Faith, which the general Spirit of Religion had imprinted upon their Minds. "The Christian Religion, says Monsr. *Le Vassor* (*Traite de l'Examen*, *ch.* 2. *p.* 69.) "was at no great distance from its "first and primitive Simplicity till the "Council of *Nice*. If *Origen* and some "others before that attempted to adjust "it to the Principles of Pagan Philo"sophy, their novel Speculations were "not generally received. In short, *Origen* shews us, that nothing but the *Word revealed* was preached to the People, that is to say, *Jesus Christ crucified*; but the *Word-God glorified* was reserved for Persons of the higher Class, that is for Favourite Souls, who had spiritualized themselves in *Plato*'s School. Wherefore History tell us, that to bring in this Platonizing Faith into the Church, and to make Entrance for it into the Minds of ordinary Christians, there was need of no less than the Authority of Emperors, the Cabals of Councils, and the Violence of Penal Laws. Monsieur *Jurieu* speaks to the very same effect: "Says he, all the vain empty Specula"tions of the Doctors of that time "(the Fathers of the three first Ages) "did no harm to the pure Faith of the "Church, that is the People (*Tabl. du* "*Socin.* 1 *part. Let.* 6. *p.* 269.) The "Speculations had not yet reached the "People, they continued in the Sim"plicity——For the rest, it was for "the Speculative Divines, and Philoso"phers bred in *Plato*'s School; such as "the *Justin Martyrs*, the *Tatians*, and "the *Athanagoras*'s were, and other "Platonizing Doctors of that sort. Then *Jurieu* concludes, saying, "There's no "body but knows that Theologi"cal Explications are not matters of "Faith.

'Tis true, we must do this Justice to *Jurieu*, as to own, that he made room for the Mystery of *God in three Persons*, in this Simplicity of [the Primitive] Faith. But it would really be a wrong done to his Judgment and good Sense, to believe that he spoke it seriously. For in short, if he would not affirm, that the Belief *of three Persons which are but one God*, was one *of those Platonizing Speculations*, against which he so much declaims; at least he ought to own, that 'tis an *Explication* that has nothing of *Simplicity* in it, and which by consequence cannot be a matter of Faith. I desire him to remember a Remark he has made in his seventh Pastoral Letter. "That when Learning was scarce among "Christians, two or three Learned "Men drew the People into their Opini"ons. He could have informed us better, that two or three Platonizing Fathers, for they were the Learned Men of the Age, were able to mislead the People from the Simplicity of their Faith to the Theology of *Plato*. If it be true that *the People* knew this profound Theology, Monsr. *Jurieu* has spoken more truly than he thought: For we find at the bottom of the Letter, that two Learned *Platonists*, *Origen*, who had his Admirers in the *East*, and St. *Austin* who had his in the *West*, have not only led the People into their Opinions, but likewise all the Learned Men that came after them, who have only copied from

from them. And consequently this Theology, whether it be to be found only among the Learned, or with the People too, was none other than a *strange Faith*, which the Learned brought into the Church, and after drew the People into it. It amounts to the same thing, either the People understood it not, or if they did, 'twas by surprize that the Learned impos'd their Mysteries, and made the common People receive a Pagan Notion for the Doctrine of J. C.

CHAP. XX.

Of the Divine Polity *or* Oeconomy *taught by the Fathers.*

HAving given some account of the way of *Allegories* us'd by the Fathers, I must not forget to say something also of their Divine *Oeconomy*, which is inseparable from it. And I must say of them, that they made use of a pious Fraud, to represent the Gospel under nobler Ideas, and in a sense elevated to the relish of the Philosophers, becoming all things to all, that they might win them to Jesus Christ: and this is that which is called their *Oeconomy*. I do not say that all the Fathers, particularly the latter, were in the secret of this sort of Conduct. Some of them have suffered themselves to be surprized with the very literal sense; and at last this Mystery, which was at first prudentially designed, degenerated into real Opinions and Metaphysical Squabbles. It's enough then that I observe, that this at first was the thing they chiefly aimed at, who brought into the Church this way of philosophizing. Hence came that famous *Managery of Mystery*, so much talked of by the Antients, and about which the Moderns at this time dispute, tho 'tis much alter'd indeed, but it flows however from the same Spring. 'Tis known that the Pagans made use of this Method, to keep up the Credit of their Religion, that was filled with ridiculous Storys, scandalous and injurious to their Gods. They had so much address, as to pretend, that a mythological and mystical sense was hidden under the umbrage of those Symbols. This one sees if one reads the Author of *Homer*'s Life, *Heraclides Ponticus* upon the Allegory of *that Poet*, and all the Philosophers who have defended the Pagan Religion against the Attacks of Christian Writers.

The same may be said of the *Jews*, their Law becoming publick by the Version of the LXX. They were out of Countenance, that a Law given 'em from Heaven, should amuse them with childish and mean Ceremonies, and undertook to defend it from the Scoffs of the Profane, by turning all into Allegory, and extracting sublime Interpretations to render it the more venerable. *Philo* among others has excelled in this way. The Christians very much followed this Practice of the *Jews*, particularly they of *Alexandria*, who learn'd this Custom of the *Therapeutes*. As the *Pharisees* were addicted to their Traditions, the *Essenes* on the contrary were addicted to the *way of Allegory*, being fond of extracting from the Scriptures, *quidlibet ex quolibet*. *Philo* imitates these latter, and the Christians have followed him. See Code 105 of *Photius*, and *Fuller*'s *Miscellan. lib. 2. c. 5.*

The Obscurity of our Saviour's Birth, and the Scandal of his Death mightily perplexed the *Catechists*; they could not conceal his Death from their Scholars, as

was

was wont to be done from those who were initiated in the Mysteries of *Ceres*. Wherefore they bethought themselves of another *Oeconomy*, which would lessen their discredit, or balance it with the Honour of a *pretended Pre existence*, by supposing in Jesus Christ another Nature, which was immortal: and this they represented very much like *Plato's Logos*, pretending to discover an exact conformity between the Doctrine of St. *John*, and that of the Philosopher. This *Argumentum ad hominem* look'd incomparably more convincing to their Novices, than that which they drew from Christ's Exaltation, which seem'd somewhat dangerous, in giving countenance to the *Apotheosis* of their false Gods. Hence is it that they rarely make use of the latter, and almost always of the former.

Was it not, I pray, by this Oeconomy that *Justin Martyr*, *Clemens* and *Origen* maintain'd, that vertuous Pagans were in a manner Christians, because they partly understood Reason, or the *Logos*? And by these evident Conformitys with 'em, they flatter'd the Pagans, and insinuated themselves very dextrously into their good opinion. *Justin Martyr* amasses with great dexterity every thing that was proper in Apologue, to colour and to justify the Mystery of the *Nativity* and the *Birth of Christ* (*Apol.* 2.) and takes as much pains to defend the Names and Titles that Christians have given him. "Since the Son of God, says he to "them, would be but a Man like other "Men; he was worthy nevertheless of "being stil'd *the Son of God*; since all "Writers give to God the Character of "being *the Father of Men and Gods*. If "we say further, that besides his Birth "usually mention'd, this Person was "begotten by God, as his Word (or "*Logos*) herein we should do no more "than you have already done, who "call *Mercury*, the Word, the Messen-"ger, and the Interpreter of God.

With the same design *Tertullian* (*Apol.* c. 21.) makes a Parallel of the History of the Son of God, with the Story of *Jupiter's* Children. Receive this Apologue, says he to the Pagans (for) it resembles yours. This he spoke, in *the way of Oeconomy* or *Accommodation*. And it was not only usual with these Fathers thus to accommodate themselves to the Prejudices of the Pagans, but by the same method to answer their Objections: For when they objected, that the Adoration of the Christ, a Man, was no less Idolatry than that whereof the Christians accus'd them; 'twas for the Interest of the latter to betake themselves to *their Oeconomy*, and to find out the second God of *Plato* in that Divine Power which dwelt in Jesus Christ, which might be worship'd without Idolatry, it having made Heaven and Earth. To conclude, 'tis this *Oeconomy* that gives Rules to the use of their Method of Allegory, and that suted it to Occasions and Circumstances. To explain this matter, it must be noted, that there are two sorts of *Allegory*: One, wherein the popular and familiar Ideas are used, to accommodate things to the capacity of the Vulgar; which is called *Parable*, or Mythology, and has been us'd by the moral Philosophers. The other, followed by Divines and speculative Philosophers, who affected *mysterious and profound Senses*, and did accommodate themselves to such as lov'd what we call the *Wonderful*. Of this sort are those nice Allegories of the Fathers, wherein under great and sublime Images they cover'd the Simplicity or Meanness of the Gospel. But above all, they endeavour'd to aggrandize the *Person* of our *Saviour*, and the *Sacraments* of the *New Covenant*, wherein one sees nothing but *Bread* and *Wine*, and *Water*. One must consider the turn they give those things, when they speak as magnificently of 'em as they can, and when they would in a manner make that which seems contemptible with the Philosophers, appear, by this artful disguise, to be the very Wisdom of those Philosophers. But, as it is of the

the nature of Parable, to make use of vulgar and popular Images to adapt to the Capacities of the meaner sort their great and more sublime Mysteries, Jesus Christ made use of these in preaching his Gospel to the Poor, and in letting down his Doctrine to meaner Capacities. But the Fathers, who had other Occasions, and were in other circumstances, took quite another way, and follow'd the Rules of their *Oeconomy*; they advanc'd their Allegorys by the most noble and most magnificent Images, to aggrandize the Simplicity of the Gospel, and to make it acceptable, at any rate, to the great Men of the World, to the Learned, and the Philosophers, with whom they convers'd.

'Tis this mischievous Policy that has brought so much confusion into the Christian Religion, that there can be no appealing to pretended Antiquity, the testimony whereof is become altogether useless, and liable to great illusion. One may think of having recourse to the Antients, as to very good Witnesses; but instead of that we meet with Oracles ambiguous and unintelligible.

A Person of good Abilitys in the last Age complains of this, as well as I. (*Michael le Vassor, Traité de l'Examen, ch.* 1. *p.* 10.) "Since Philosophy, says "he, was brought into Christianity, the "latter has so visibly degenerated from "its primitive Simplicity, that the *Pa-*"*gans* themselves have taken notice of "it. The Method thought believ'd it "would be a great Service done to Re-"ligion, to render it agreeable to the "taste of the Philosophers; they had "a mind to reconcile our Mysteries with "*Plato's* Principles, which were ex-"tremely in fashion, when the Gospel "first went abroad into the World. "*Origen*, and St. *Austin* afterwards, have "so embaras'd Theology, the former "in the East, and the latter in the Wes-"tern Churches, where both had their "Admirers and Disciples, by endea-"vouring to adjust Christianity to that "Philosophy; that 'twill cost one a "world of pains to distinguish *that*, "which they and their Followers have "said, with any exactness of thought, "upon divers important points of Reli-"gion. They give us none but alle-"gorical Senses to divers Passages in "the Holy Scriptures. Their Exposi-"tions appear so wide from the Sense "of the Sacred Authors, that one knows "not how to understand it, so as to dis-"cern the true Doctrine of the A-"postles from the particular Speculations "of the major part of those (Fathers) "to whom we are refer'd, as to faithful "Witnesses of the Faith of the Times "they liv'd in.

But the Fathers were not content to accommodate their Doctrines to the *Platonick Word* (or λόγος) but enquir'd further, after another Pre-existence of Jesus Christ, for the satisfaction of the *Jews*, and they found it in the *Angel* that spoke to *Moses* and the other *Patriarchs*. *Tertullian*, in his Dispute against *Marcion*, *lib.* 3. speaking of the *State* of Christ before the Revelation of the Gospel, says, that *he was in that allegorical State of spiritual Grace*, &c. These few Words seem to discover the whole Mystery of the Oeconomy of the *Antients*: For they signify, that Christ was not only represented in the Figures of the Law, but, as *Origen* speaks, that *he was substantially present in Moses and the Prophets*, Tract. 26. in *Mat.* meaning thereby that *Moses* and the Prophets were, if one may so speak, substantial and personal Types of Christ to come; or rather that Christ was then present in the Person of *Moses* and the Prophets, who were his Types. On the like ground may we not say, that he was allegorically present in all the Angels, who spoke from God to Men, and that he was also allegorically present in that Word of God which created the World? that *powerful Word*, which said, *Let there be Light*, being a Type of this *powerful Word*, which said by Jesus Christ, *Let the Light shine in the Hearts of Men.*

This

This allegorical Pre-existence of Christ is very agreeable with the Scriptures, which say that of him which cannot belong to any thing but these Types; as, the *Reproach of Christ*, the *Spirit of Christ prophesying*, *tempted of Christ*, and other Expressions of that kind, which represent to us Jesus Christ in his *allegorical State*: Those particular Commissions of Angels and Prophets, being in some sort the *Preludia* of this universal and extraordinary Commission of Jesus Christ with regard to the whole World. I ought not to pass over the Remark of Father *Simon* upon this Oeconomy of the Antients (*Hist. Crit. du N. T. Tom.* 1. *chap.* 2.) "The mingling, says he, of "the *Platonick Philosophy* with the "*Christian Religion*, was not intended to "ruin the Orthodox Faith, but the "more easily to persuade the *Greeks* to "embrace the Christian Religion. The "Fathers were in this for imitating the "Apostles, especially St. *Paul*, who "sometimes did stoop to the Infirmitys "of the Weak, *becoming all things to all* "*men.*

Father *Simon* observes further, that *Clemens* of *Alexandria* does sometimes carry this Oeconomy too far; that he applies himself intirely to Allegory, it being fashionable in his time amongst the Christians, especially with the *Gnosticks*, who thought thereby to raise the Credit of the Scriptures; that he is no ways behind 'em in point of Invention and Subtilty: That this was the more excusable in him, because he liv'd in a great City, where 'tis likely they affected those kind of Subtilties; and that he believ'd 'em of use to establish the Christian Religion, it being a prudent part in an able Master to adapt things to the capacity of them he is to instruct: That his *Pædagogus*, wherein he was to lay down nothing but plain Instructions, was drawn up with this design; and that in it he explains the Scriptures in the sublime and allegorical Sense. He observes also, Chap. 4. "That those who had not these "sublime Notions, pass'd for plain "weak Christians, who knew not the "design of Religion; that the *Gnosticks* "imagin'd themselves outdid all others "in this kind of Knowledg, and that "it had been better if the Orthodox had "not imitated them therein, but had "contented themselves with the literal "Expositions of the Scriptures. He "goes forward to say, that the *Jews* "had mingled in their Religion divers "*Platonick Notions*, whereof one finds "at this day not a few in their *Cabalistick* "*Writings*. This made some impres- "sion on the Minds of some of the first "Christians, who read with pleasure "Books that treated of Angels, and "their Converse with Men. The same Author makes it appear, "That not on- "ly those who rejected the *allegorical* "*way*, were accounted illiterate, but "even pass'd for Hereticks too (*ibid.* "*chap.* 31.) and that *Theodorus* of *Mop-* "*sues*, who followed the literal Sense "of the Bible, according to the Me- "thod of his Master *Diodorus*, and a- "voided the spiritual and allegorical "Sense, was reckoned for a Person "who favour'd *Judaism* by his too *lite-* "*ral Expositions.*

For my part, I make no doubt, but 'twas of that Set of Divines who imitated *Theodorus*, that *Pamphilus* is speaking, when he complains (*Apol. pro Orig.*) "That they who charg'd *Origen* with so "many Absurdities, would not admit "Allegory to be us'd in expounding the "Holy Scriptures. It may be conjectur'd from these words, that the great reason why the *Ebionites* and *Nazarenes* were accounted plain simple People, and poor in the Faith, was this; that they rejected the allegorical Theology of the *Platonizing* and *Gnostick* Christians: The Word [*Ebionite*] which signifies poor, and the other Word [*Gnostick*] which signifies knowing, being directly oppos'd. 'Tis certain *Origen* calls the *Ebionites* poor in Spirit, *Philoc. c.* 1. because they adher'd too much to the Poverty of the Letter,

Letter, or literal Senſe, and deſpis'd the rich and the ſublime Senſe of Contemplation. 'Tis moreover upon the ſame account, that ſo many great Men are ſaid to *Judaize*, becauſe they were for keeping the Scriptures in their natural and literal Senſe; ſuch were *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, *Theodotion*, and others.

'Tis evident that the Fathers, who were for appearing Learned, and would not be outdone by the *Gnoſticks*, have allegoriz'd after the very manner of thoſe *Hereticks*; but upon ſuch things that had ſome ſort of Foundation in the Scriptures, and in the Philoſophy of thoſe Times, embrac'd by the *Jews*, or the *Platonick* Party. As for inſtance, about the Ideas and *Decrees of God*; concerning the *Meſſiah*; about the *Soul* of the *Meſſiah*; about the Spirit that form'd, and after ſanctified him; about the Angels that were the *Preludia* of his Miſſion; or laſtly, about that *Word of God*, which created the World, to whom they aſcrib'd Perſonality, after the *Platonick* way. The *Word*, or *Logos*, might ſignify all theſe things, the Wiſdom of God that dwelt in Jeſus Chriſt, his pre-exiſtent Soul, the Spirit that form'd him, and the facility with which he wrought ſo many Miracles, only, as it were, at the expence of a Word. After this manner the *Jews* have allegoriz'd upon the ſeven things that they ſay were created before the World, among which they count the Name, or the Glory of the *Meſſiah*. To ſay the truth, the Oeconomy of the Fathers very often varys: For at one time they are for concealing the *ſublimer part* of their Myſteries, that they mayn't give offence to ſome ſturdy Minds, that will not ſo readily give way to myſtical Notions. At other times they paſs over the plainer part of Religion, to gain upon their ſpeculative Gentlemen, who admire chiefly what we call the *Wonderful*. But however, they are always conſtant in purſuing this Deſign of their *Oeconomy* and Rule of Prudence, in adapting themſelves to the *Genius* and *Reliſh* of every body, in making Myſtery of every thing, to beget in their Scholars a Veneration for their Opinions, when they come to be acquainted with 'em. And further, they take care to diſtinguiſh between *thoſe Opinions*, which were tranſmitted to 'em by the Writings of the Apoſtles, and *others* which came from the ſame Apoſtles by Tradition only, and in *Myſtery*, as St. *Baſil* ſpeaks (*Lib. de Spir. S. ad Amphil. Cap.* 27.) that is, by the way of *ſecret Diſcipline and Inſtruction*. *Clemens* of *Alexandria* makes mention of theſe laſt Opinions (*Stromat.* 5. *p.* 576.) and calls 'em, *The Leſſon of the Perfect*, which conſiſts in certain ſpiritual and ſublime Senſes, which were deliver'd *vivâ voce*, and by Tradition; but the Apoſtles could not ſet 'em down in their Epiſtles.

This Expedient of *ſecret Tradition* open'd a wide Field for philoſophizing according to their humour, and is adapted to the purpoſe of introducing new Opinions into Religion. We muſt be upon our guard when we are reading their Writings, and take very little of them in the literal Senſe, where every thing almoſt is allegorical, and they are throout purſuing what we call the *Wonderful*. 'Tis well known to the Proteſtants, that the *Declamations* and *Apoſtrophe*'s of the Fathers have given birth to ſome Errors, and the Idolatry practis'd at this day. They know well enough how to account for the hyperbolical Expoſitions of the Antients upon the Euchariſt; as, that Jeſus Chriſt was offer'd upon an Altar; that he was ſlain, ſtrangl'd, extended, died, carry'd, bury'd, *&c.* And theſe ridiculous Apoſtrophe's: *O great and ſacred Paſſover, the Purgation of our Sins!* &c. (Greg. Naz.) *O Divine and ſacred Myſtery! vouchſafe to remove the Veil wherewith we are encompaſſed, and manifeſt your ſelf clearly to us, by enlightning with your brightneſs the Eyes of our Mind.* (*See* Counterfeit Denis.) Theſe Apoſtrophe's ſeem to deify the Sacrament, and to make it a Perſon. Why

should we not acknowledg at the same time, that the over-curious *Platonism* of the same Fathers has led 'em into those extravagant Descriptions, whereby they have made a second God, a Person of the *Word* or *Logos*, a Son begotten before Ages, and incarnate in time? Mysteries no less strange than that of *Transubstantiation*.

Who does not see that they had a mind to speak magnificently of every thing? They ascrib'd a Divine and extraordinary Virtue to the Oil and the Cream: They say that the Holy Ghost has chang'd and transform'd 'em by a Divine Efficacy. They have said no less of Baptism; for they believ'd the Divinity, and the Holy Ghost descending, and insinuating it self into the Water us'd in that Sacrament, imparts to it the Power and Virtue of regenerating. They allow that the Eucharist shews a Divine and quickening Virtue emanating from the Body of the *incarnate Word*. The *Word*, according to them, is an Emanation from the Substance of *God*: The Body of Christ is hypostatically united to the *Word*: The Bread is hypostatically united to that Divine Body, and consequently hath the quickening Virtue of the Word. They own a twofold Emanation, the Word is the *Emanation* of *God*, and the quickening Virtue of his Flesh is an *Emanation* of the Word. And they hold a twofold Incarnation; one of the Word in the Body of Jesus Christ; and another of the quickening Virtue of the Body of Christ in the Bread of the Sacrament. This was a System of Policy well contriv'd, whereby these cunning Doctors brought nothing less than Divinity into every thing, and spoke with advantage upon the meanest Subjects, to make 'em look mysterious and venerable. It may be said of them, as has been observ'd of those who make Canons in *Councils*, that they spake more than they meant; so that many Ages after, Mysteries are discover'd in their Expressions, which they never dreamt of. I have met with nothing so like that, as these two Apostrophe's, which the Church of *Rome* chants in her Liturgy: One is addres's'd to the Trinity, *O Holy, Blessed and Glorious Trinity, Three Persons and One God, have Mercy upon us miserable Sinners!* The other is addres's'd to the Cross of Christ, *O Cross, my only Hope, I salute thee at this time of the Passion! increase the Righteousness of Good Men, and pardon the Crimes of the Wicked.* Here you have two *Saints*, which one and the same Superstition hath *canoniz'd*, two Prayers cast in the same *Mould*; for both one and t'other are the fruit of *Idolatry*, and of *false Eloquence*.

Upon which I will make this Observation, that it has fal'n out with the Oeconomy of these Primitive Fathers, as it has with the Admirers of Episcopacy here in *England*, who having retain'd a Liturgy and divers Ceremonies, that they might bring over the more Papists to their Communion, yet they still continue to look upon those things, at this time, in a sort necessary to Religion, altho there's now no more occasion for that Reason of Prudence; and even as great a Reason of Charity, and a second Reason of Prudence, should oblige 'em to relax, or lay 'em by, to gain the Non-Conformists. 'Tis the same case with the Allegorical and Oeconomical Mystery of the antient Fathers: The *Reason of Prudence* ceasing, since we have now no more *Platonists* to gain, nor *Gnosticks* to outbrave, the Oeconomy of the *Logos* ought to cease at the same time. Yet we do in this, as in every thing else, we never reform; and it often happens that the Religion of Posterity is nothing else but the mere Policy or Oeconomy of their Ancestors.

I have but one Reflection more to shew the Source of this *Allegory*. *Cerinthus* was the Man who first brought in this usage of *Platonizing*: As he is the first Author of a *Logos*, or an *invisible Christ*, he is also the first who began to make use of the *Oeconomy* in the Christian Religion.

'Tis

'Tis he who turns the Reſurrection into *Allegory*, explaining it by the Evangelical Regeneration, or rather by the State of *Quietude*, wherein the Contemplative are, when they quit this World to raiſe themſelves to the *Speculation of Myſteries*, and the Knowledg of *Ideas*. The *Quietiſts* have not fail'd to frame an Ideal and *Allegorical Word* or *Logos*, even as they have alſo taught an *Allegorical* and *Ideal Reſurrection*. Without queſtion they allegoriz'd, when they ſaid, *Chriſt* deſcended into *Jeſus*, meaning, that *Jeſus* was anointed, and made the *Chriſt*, when the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon him at his Baptiſm. (See *Grotius* on 1 *Cor.* 15. 1.) They did no leſs allegorize, when upon the ſame ground they added, that the *Chriſt*, which deſcended on *Jeſus*, aſcended into Heaven, and left him at the moment of his Paſſion. By which they meant, as St. *Paul* ſays, that *Jeſus* humbl'd himſelf, that he laid by the Power and the Spirit with which he was endu'd, and left himſelf to be cruciñed, as a Man feeble, and without Power, or rather as a Slave (*Tertul. contra Prax. cap.* 30.) St. *Hilary* and St. *Ambroſe* did not underſtand ſo much fineneſs, ſince they made bold to ſay bluntly, and without figure, *that the Word was divorc'd from the Fleſh*, that *the God was ſeparated from the Man, and left him to himſelf.*

In ſhort, that which I am ſaying of the uſe of this Allegory, amounts to this: 'Tis well known, that the Pagans invented three ſorts of *Allegory*, the Phyſical, the Moral, and the Theological; which never fail'd 'em at a pinch, to cover the abſurdity of their Fables, and of the Hiſtory of their Gods. 'Tis after this way they defended themſelves, as we ſee in St. *Clemens* his Recognitions, *lib.* 10. *cap.* 30. ſaying, that the literal Senſe of their Fables was contriv'd in condeſcenſion to the Vulgar; but that they had beſides an allegorical and elevated Senſe for the Learned. That in this laſt Senſe they ſaid, for example, that *Jupiter* from his own Brain begat the Goddeſs *Minerva*, that is, Wiſdom; to ſhew, that 'tis by his Wiſdom that the Father of all things created the World. One may truly ſay, the Chriſtians have in a manner follow'd the ſame Method: For not to mention their many Moral Allegories, which they invented to conceal that which ſeemed to 'em too low and mean for the Majeſty of the H. Scriptures, 'tis ſufficient to obſerve here, that all they have told us of *an eternal and inviſible Son*, of his incomprehenſible Generation, and other Speculations of the like nature, is nothing elſe but a *theological Allegory*, by which they varniſh'd whatever appear'd too mean in the eyes of Philoſophers, in the Hiſtory of Jeſus Chriſt. The *Pagans* and the *Chriſtians* have hereby equally quitted themſelves of a difficulty, that expos'd 'em to mutual Reproaches. The *Pagans* were aſham'd of their ridiculous *Fables*, and the *Chriſtians* were of the *Croſs of Chriſt*; and both of 'em ſurmounted thoſe Inconveniences by a dextrous uſe of (what we call) the *Wonderful*, which is to be met with in their *Allegory*.

CHAP. XXI.

An Account of what the Fathers called Theology.

WHAT the Fathers called *Theology* is another sort of *Machine* they acted withal to represent to us a contemplative Gospel, formed after the Ideas of *Plato*, which *theologizes*, that is, *speaks of any Person in the same Stile, as one usually speaks of God:* as if the Person had a miraculous Birth, to say he *came down from Heaven*; if he reform'd Mankind, to say *he created the World*; if God rais'd him to any extraordinary Dignity, to say that *he was begotten of God*. All this so far agrees with the Scriptures, but especially with the Stile of St. *John*, who affects throughout his Writings to *theologize* all the Subjects he treats on. I will give you but this one Instance, *John* 3. 13. *No Man*, says he, *has ascended into Heaven*, &c. The foregoing Words do shew that he *theologized* in this Passage: he had said to the *Jews*, *How will you believe, if I tell you of Heavenly things? For no Man has ascended into Heaven*, &c. that is, to say plainly, that no Man can acquaint you with Heavenly Things, but he who came down from Heaven, or who drew his Origin from Heaven. The sense therefore is this, *The Son of Man who was born from Heaven by the Holy Ghost* (and on this account may be said, in the theological way, *to have come down from Heaven*) *The same Son of Man was raised to the Knowledg of all the Secrets of Heaven, by the Gifts he received from the same Spirit*; and on that account it may be further said in the theological Stile, *That he ascended into Heaven.* No Man then was rais'd to the Knowledg of the Secrets of Heaven, but he who was originally from Heaven, that is, the Son of Man who was wholly from Heaven. After this manner the *Jews* did *theologize*, when they said, that their Law was before the Creation of the *World*. The *Mahometans* do the same, when they speak so magnificently of the *Gospel*, as to say *it fell down from Heaven*; sometimes speaking the same thing of the *Alcoran*, which they call the Word of God, which was not made, but came down from Heaven. *Barthol. Edessen. Confut. Agar.* They give also the same Honour to Jesus Christ, who because he was born without a human Father, after an extraordinary manner, is, in their oriental and theological Stile, the *Eternal* Word, the *Word* of God by way of Excellence: that is, he is the Word, 1. Because he had no other Father, than that Word and that Commandment had, which made the World from nothing. 2. Because he with the assistance of that very Word, has distinguish'd himself by a great number of Miracles. *Hottinger Hist. Orient. lib. 1. cap. 3. pag. 105. & Simon Voyage du Mont. Liban. p. 262.*

Again, nothing is more reasonable, than that manner of *Theologizing* things great and extraordinary, provided all these pompous Expressions be taken in a metaphorical sense. But the Misfortune is, that the *grosser Platonism* has impos'd upon the Fathers, who have spoken in this manner of J.C. in the very Letter: So that to *theologize* with them, is to ascribe to Jesus Christ the *Divine Nature and Substance* with all its Attributes, or at least to ascribe to him a Nature very near and like to that of God; for so *Eusebius*, *arianizing upon the Nature of the pre-existent Word*, calls him, *Hist. Eccles.*

Eccleſ. lib. 1. *cap.* 2. *The Prince of the Heavenly Hoſt, the Angel of great Counſel, the Miniſter of the Will of God, the ſecond Cauſe of all things, a God and a King who received the Government from the Father, with his Divinity.* Ask him from whence he took all theſe fine Titles of the *Word*: he'll tell you from the *Myſtical Theology* of the Scriptures. The current Theology of the Scriptures ſays nothing of this: 'tis no matter for that, ſome know how to feign and ſuppoſe a myſtic Theology, which does. But 'twas not an eaſy thing to make a *God begotten before Ages*, of a Man born at *Bethlehem*. There's ſomething that anſwers all difficulties, and that's another Expedient they have thought on, which is, to diſtinguiſh the two Natures in Jeſus Chriſt, the Divine Nature which they call *Theology*, and the Human which they call *Oeconomy*; and to frame hereupon a new Word which ſignifies nothing, becauſe it carries to the Mind at the ſame time two Ideas that deſtroy each other, *viz. Man-God*, or a *God-Man*. They have left to *the Man* the Hiſtory and Facts of the Goſpel, but for *the God* they have found out a nobler Goſpel in the World of Ideas.

'Tis ſomewhat entertaining to obſerve what the Author of the 2*d Homil. in diverſes* aſcribed to *Origen*, ſays to this purpoſe: Having compar'd St. *John* to a *Spiritual Eagle*, who ſoars with a ſwift Flight into the ſublimeſt Regions of Theology, and the greateſt heights of Contemplation; he afterwards draws a Parallel between him and St. *Peter*, and diſtinguiſhes between *Faith* and *Science*; between *Practice*, which is common to all Chriſtians, and *Contemplation*, which is a *Goſpel* for *Seraphic* Souls. He makes St. *Peter* the Type of *Faith and Practice* in his good Confeſſion, *Thou art the Chriſt the Son of the living God.* But he makes St. *John* to be as it were the Model of *Science* and *Contemplation*, with reſpect to the admirable *Exordium* of his Goſpel; *In the beginning was the Word*, &c. " St. " *John*, ſays he, reſting himſelf alone " upon the Boſom of Chriſt, this Pri- " vilege or Favour was to him the " Sign and Sacrament, or Seal, of *Con-* " *templation.* This *John*, ſays he, who " was not a mere Man, but more than " a Man, ſince by the Penetration of " his Mind and his Wiſdom, he enter'd " into the Secrets of *one Eſſence and three* " *Subſtances*, or *of three Subſtances in* " *one Eſſence.* This *John* who deified " himſelf, could not by his Penetration " reach God himſelf, till he had firſt " made himſelf a God. This is very loftily ſpoke, the Fathers were not content to make a God of the *Word*; they went farther, and make a God of St. *John* too, becauſe he ſpoke ſo divinely. 'Twas a Tranſport of their Zeal and Affection to the *Word*, when they deified the Apoſtle, who had before in their Opinion ſo well deified the *Word.* This Zeal of theirs extends it ſelf even to the *Divine Plato*, to whom they thought themſelves no leſs obliged; for they have done him the Honour to ſay, that when Jeſus Chriſt deſcended into Hell, *Plato* was the firſt who came before the *Eternal Word*, of whom he had ſpoken with that Magnificence in his Writings.

By virtue of the ſame true *Platonic* Zeal, *Euſebius de Vita Conſtant. lib.* 3. *cap.* 55. calls *Conſtantine* an Eagle, and honours him with the ſame Elogy that was given St. *John*; for how great muſt the Obligation be to this new Apoſtle, for diſcovering the profound Myſtery of *Conſubſtantiality*, for which the Church was indebted to him? 'Tis for the ſame reaſon that he has the Character beſtow'd upon him, of being a *profound Divine*, an *Expounder of Myſteries*, *the Bird of Paradiſe*, &c. by the *counterfeit Dionyſius*, who has found Books ſtuffed with the moſt refined *Platoniſm.* He who knew ſo much of the Secrets of the Celeſtial Court, and has told us ſuch News of the Hierarchy of the Angels, might as well inſtruct us in the Nature, the Number, and the Order of the *Divine Perſons.*

Theſe

These mystical Eagles know how, when they please, to soar beyond the bounds of Revelation, and to penetrate into the profound Secrets of the *Deity*, I would say of the *Unity in Trinity* and *the Trinity in Unity*. And what Praises are due to them for such fine Discoveries? Certainly the Author I am speaking of deserves himself the Character of an Eagle; for observe how far he advances his Philosophy. He will have the Scriptures to be an intelligible World, made up of four Elements. The Historical Part he calls the Earth, the Moral Part the Water: that Part which is the object of natural Science is the Air: and lastly that which is the Object of the most exalted Contemplation is the fourth Element or Fire. And 'tis this Contemplation, says he, that the *Greeks* call Theology: Whence he takes occasion to call St. *John* a *great Theologue* or Divine; "Because, says he, he raises himself "far above the Historical, the Moral, "and the natural Objects. Thus *Dionysius the Areopagite*, speaking of the same Gospel of St. *John*, calls *it supernatural and transcendental Theology*. In short, Monsr. *Daille*, *de Libris suppos. Dionys.* &c. *c.* 16. tells you, *That one finds in the three other Gospels, nothing but the Oeconomy of Jesus Christ; but one sees in the Gospel of St.* John *the Theology of Jesus Christ.*

Hence it appears, that the Antients did not call by the Name of *Theology*, that Science which treats of God in a plain obvious manner; but such *refined contemplative Discourses*, which speak of him in the *abstract way:* so that their Theology was in a manner the same with what we call Metaphysicks, that is, the Philosophy of curious abstracted Minds. How great an Abuse of the Word was this! As if *true Theology* was not that, which had for its Object a sensible Revelation, and a plain Gospel suted to the Capacities of the common People, which these Gentlemen are pleas'd to call a Gospel that is gross and corporeal. How! The Chimeras and the crude Imaginations of the Mind of Man shall be compared to the most noble Elements, and the first Facts of the Gospel with the Precepts of a good Life; that is, *History* and the *Moral* (upon which, as upon two firm Pillars, are founded our Faith and Practice) shall in their account be no more than the terrestrial and grosser Element. Is not that to reduce the *Science* of the *Perfect* to carnal Rudiments? I might as well like *Homer*'s Theology, who at the same time as he deified Men, debas'd the Gods. Agreeable to the Model of this noble Theology, *Eusebius Demonst. Evang. lib.* 4. and *Origen Tom.* 2. *in Joan.* have fancied a certain Son of God, whom they call Θεολογούμενος υἱός, The theological Son, or the Son who is theologized, that is without doubt, a Son in Idea, the Object of their profound Speculations. For to *theologize*, according to them, is not only to speak of *God* and his *Attributes*, but of *Angels* too, of *Æons*, of *Ideas*, of *Emanations*; and in a word, of every thing that belongs to the *intelligible World* of the *Platonists*; Theology being a Term affected by all the *contemplative Gentlemen*, whether *Orthodox* or *Gnosticks*. These sort of Folks did not regard the Facts of the Gospel, which prove its Divine Authority, any otherwise than as grosser Proofs proper for vulgar weaker Minds. But for *Contemplation*, the Case was quite otherwise; this they thought a noble and powerful Medium, by which Souls of the first Rank elevated themselves to the Knowledg of *the noblest Truths*. Yet the Gospel is not founded upon any thing but *Facts*, and the chief Objects of our Faith are certain Facts contained in the Apostles Creed. Is it not therefore a putting the Gospel upon another Foot, if we carry on our Contemplations to Abstractions, and the Ideas of a crude chimerical Metaphysicks? 'Tis an extravagant System, if instead of Facts well proved and rightly circumstanced, there be nothing left but a mere Operation of the

the Understanding, and an *Ens Rationis*, which these Gentlemen are pleas'd to call the *Word* or the *Son theologized*.

That great Man Monſ. *Jurieu*, whom God was pleaſed to favour with the knowledg of every thing, did not fail to ſet aſide this *falſe Theology* of the *Fathers* (7 *Let. Paſt. de la* 3 *Année*) "Beſides the Faith of the Vulgar, ſays he, "which was immediately founded upon the Sacred Writings, the Doctors "fram'd a *Theology*, that is, they undertook to expound the Myſteries in a "ſenſe beyond that wherein the Holy "Scriptures themſelves have delivered "them. And 'tis in that they have "diſagreed, and one muſt not wonder "at it, becauſe the things they went "about to explain were profound, and "it may be inexplicable; and becauſe "they made uſe of a falſe Philoſophy, "which they brought into their *Theology*. And by ſo doing they have ruined *Theology*, and at laſt Religion in "all Ages. The Faith of the Antients "therefore muſt not be condemned as "if it were changed, altho they diſagreed in their Theology. And it "muſt be noted, that this Theology "ſhould not be admitted into the *Faith*: "that is, *Articles of Faith* ſhould not "be formed out of *Theological Expoſitions*. Is not this much for the Honour of the Theology of the Antients? According to Monſ. *Jurieu*, theſe good Doctors could not *theologize* the Son, without hazarding the *Faith*; and conſequently, one ought not to receive amongſt the Articles of Faith their theological Explications, concerning *a Son begotten and not made*, an *Internal Word*, and a Word brought forth, *&c.* Nevertheleſs it's well known, that the Fathers conſider'd the theological Senſe not only as true, but as that which the Spirit of God had chiefly in its view. So that they who would impoſe the Faith of the theological Senſe of the *Word*, becauſe the Fathers urg'd it, are themſelves obliged to receive all the other theological Senſes, which the ſame Fathers have given to ſo many other Terms in Scripture, and which they believe to be no leſs the Purport and Deſign of the Holy Ghoſt, which yet is not done, but they are looked upon even as ridiculous. Why therefore is it not acknowledged *bona Fide* alſo, that the Expoſition of the *Logos or Word*, is one of thoſe wretched Allegories ſo much declaimed againſt at that day, and an Article of that *falſe Theology*, which is incompatible with *the Chriſtian Faith*?

But let us pay as much reſpect to the Fathers as we can, let us preſerve *their Theology*; be it ſo, provided that the theological Senſe be not ſaid to be deſigned for any other than *contemplative and ſeraphic Minds*, and that no more than the Faith or Belief of the plain natural ſenſe be requir'd of Men as Men. *Origen* was too fair to deſire more than this, he acquaints his Readers at the beginning of his Book περὶ Ἀρχῶν, that the Sacred Writers did not concern themſelves with abſtruſe Matters and ſpeculative Subjects, which few of them, whom they called to the Chriſtian Religion, were capable of underſtanding; but confined themſelves to thoſe few clear Articles, which were neceſſary for the Reformation of the World, to bring them into a State of Righteouſneſs, and give them hopes of Immortality: Leaving the more refined Contemplations, which were not contrary to *prime Truths*, to the commendable Curioſity of thoſe, whom Nature and Education had qualify'd for ſuch Enquiries.

Dr. *Ruſt* (in his Diſcourſe of *Origen* and the chief of his Opinions) has obſerved alſo: "That there were neceſſa"ry Truths, which the Apoſtles had "clearly taught, and the Church recei"ved, the contrary whereto cannot be "received, without retrenching an eſ"ſential part of Religion. But that "there were beſides ſome Contemplati"ons, about which the Scriptures had not "determin'd any thing; and that the "Truth

" Truth as to these matters was purposely concealed by the Holy Ghost, " as *Origen* thought, to excite their Study and Industry, who were Lovers of " the Truth, that the Discovery of so " great a Treasure might be a Recompence for their pious Enquiries. Without doubt all the other Fathers agreed in this very Principle with *Origen*, that the contemplative Subjects were not necessary nor essential to Religion, 'that they did not oblige ordinary Christians, and that they were left to the commendable Enquiries of the *Curious*. *Servetus*, who constantly imitates the Fathers, agrees in this, tho he was in other respects a great Admirer of *Platonism* and *Contemplation*. " The Apostles, says he, *de Trinit. lib.* " 2. *p.* 50. did not rashly publish this " great Mystery of the *Incarnation* of " the *Word*; 'twas after several Essays, " and having fasted and prayed, that St. " *John* pronounced these Words, *In the* " *beginning was the Word*, &c. 'Twas sufficient to Salvation to believe, that *Je-* " *sus was the Christ or the Messias, the* " *Son of God, the Saviour of the World.* " The common People were justified by " this Faith alone, altho they did not " exactly know his Divinity. You " therefore, pious Readers, who are not " able to comprehend the manner of his " *Generation*, nor the whole Fulness of " his Divinity, always believe that he is " the *Messias*, begotten of God, and thy " Saviour. This is the only thing you " should believe, that you may live by " him.

But let us hear *Origen* speak for himself; 'tis in his Preface to St. *John*, that one shall find the famous distinction he makes between the *intelligible* and the *sensible Gospel*; and how he there divides Christians *into two Classes*, the one of those who are Children in the Faith, and are led by the *Rudiments* of the Gospel; and the other of those *intelligent and elevated Minds*, who are capable of understanding *the Divinity of the glorified God*! " That Doctor or Teacher, says he, who " is willing to profit all Persons, cannot " however make the *secret and sublime* " *Christianity* known to such who can " only understand the plain and the re- " vealed Christianity. Wherefore 'tis " necessary that we should be Ministers of " the Gospel, as well in *the Letter* as " in *the Spirit*, and that we preach the " *sensible* or *corporeal Gospel* (as he stiles " it) When we see it proper, we tell " the *Carnal*, that we aim at nothing " else, *but to know Jesus Christ crucified.* " But when we meet with the *elevated* " *Minds*, that are advanced in the Doc- " trine of our Saviour, and enflamed " with the Love of *Heavenly Wisdom*, " 'tis these we acquaint with the " Knowledg of the Word or *Logos*. And in his 7th Book against *Celsus*, " There " is not one Person, says he, to whom " Jesus Christ does not give a taste of " these Mysteries some way or other: " For he imparts his Theology to the " Wise, who raise their Minds to con- " template sublime Subjects. On the " other hand, he accommodates himself " to the Capacity of the Common Peo- " ple, of Idiots, of the Weak, of Wo- " men, of Slaves, *&c.* He affords " them such means of a good Life as " they seek after, keeping from them " such Notions as they cannot compre- " hend.

Thanks be to God I can now take Breath: The Doctrine of *God the Word*, is no more than secret (or mystical) Christianity, not necessary to the Vulgar, and serves only for Contemplation. May it continue to be the Study of *contemplative Minds*, who were born for the purpose of *knowing Mysteries*, and have Skill to advance their Knowledg *beyond Revelation*. It's enough for me, that I have their Leave to content my self with *plain revealed Christianity*, which is the Object of Faith; and that they allowing me the Rudiments (or Lessons) of the Gospel for my Guide, I may say, with their Leave, as the Apostle and other plain simple Christians of the same Class,

I know nothing but Jesus Christ crucified. Really one could not but with surprize hear so great a Doctor as *Origen* treating the Christian Religion, and the Theology of St. *Paul* so unworthily; if one did not know at the same time, his Fondness for Platonism. What! shall this *Contemplation* be accounted the *sublime Christianity*, because it has found out Objects of it self without the help of Revelation? What then is that *poor Faith* that's founded upon Objects revealed? Can it be any thing more or less than a *carnal Christianity?* 'Tis some favour however that it may be *Christianity*: Tho so much as that will hardly be granted, at this time of Day. They who know nothing but a *crucified Christ*, do not pass even for Christians now; a *deified Jesus*, is the only Orthodoxy.

If you have a mind to observe also what a prodigious difference there is between the *Simplicity of the Apostolic Faith*, and the *Mystery of Platonism*; you need only to consider how little regard it had to the first: assoon as any one own'd this Fundamental Article, that *Jesus was the Messias*, he was instantly baptized and received as a true Member of the Church. But when its Articles of Faith were enlarged, and became inexplicable by the profound Speculations with which they were clog'd, how cautiously and warily did they initiate Persons in the *Theology* of the same Church. This is plain from the several degrees of the *catechized* State, thro which their Novices passed. At first they did not suffer them to come within their Churches, then they admitted 'em only to hear Sermons, after that they might be present at the Prayers; at last after long Instructions they were qualified for Baptism: *Tanta molis erat Platonis condere gentem*; So great a Task had they to establish the *Platonick* Theology! Will it not be said, that these are the same Formalities that were us'd in admitting the antient *Mystæ?* Thro how many degrees must they pass, before they were admitted to enter the Sanctuary of the *Great Goddess?* that is, before they became *Epoptæ* or Eye-Witnesses of the most private Ceremonies. The *Pagans* lost nothing (in the Forms of Initiation) by embracing the Christian Religion.

But this is not all, it must be farther consider'd, what a Deadroll of Mysteries are taught in their Catechisings: Take but that of *Cyril* of *Jerusalem*, and you will certainly meet with them in him. There you have the *Trinity*, the *Eternal Generation*, the *Incarnation*, the *sacred and venerable Sacrifice*, and many other things of that nature, that must be known, he tells you, in order to Baptism. If any one of them be neglected, there's no Admission for you. All these Mysteries have an essential Band of Union between them; so that if any one of them be not understood, you are in peril of being ignorant of all the rest. And hereupon *Cyril* recommends to the *Catechized*, before all other things, the Knowledg of these Mysteries. What a Drudgery is here for the *poor Novices!* Incomprehensible Mystery, and a Labyrinth in Theology! And besides, which is a little wonderful, he does not forget that Mystery of Mysteries, and sublimer part of Theology, I mean the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation:* "There is no "longer (says he to his Novices) Bread "or Wine, let your Senses say what they "please, you are not to regard them, "but the Testimony of Faith. Since "J. C. has said of the Bread, *This is* "*my Body*, who dares call it in question? "And since he has said, *This is my* "*Blood*, who dares say it is not? He at "other times changed Water into Wine, "and is he not to be believed, when he "says he has changed the Wine into "his Blood? &c. Here he acquits himself like an Orator and a Sophister too. Can any body wonder after this, if the new baptized were deluded into the Belief of the *Trinity* with such Harangues as these? The Artifice is the same in both Cases.

Wherefore the Author of the Book of the *Sacraments*, takes care to compare these two Mysteries, and to prove them, as I may say, by one another, shewing that what we receive in the *Eucharist*, is as really the true Flesh of Christ, as he is truly the consubstantial Son of God: "As Jesus Christ, says "he, is the true Son of God, and is "so not only by Grace as Men are, but "as he is a Son of the Substance of the "Father: So it is the Flesh of Christ "we receive, and the Blood of Christ "that we drink. One deep calls upon a-"nother. The Doctrine of the *Consubstantiality*, &c. is the Model and Original to the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. And the first serves for a Guide and a Light, to conduct you thro the Perplexitys and Obscurities of the last, for they are Twin-Sisters, born in *Plato*'s School.

That which is remarkable is, that *Justin*, the first of the *Platonizing Fathers*, made the very same Comparison; so natural was it for *Platonism* to sort these two Mysterys, and make 'em Companions: "We do not, (says he, *Apol.* 2.) "receive these things as common Bread "or common Wine: but just as by the "Word of God Jesus Christ our Savi-"our was made Man, and took Flesh "and Blood to save us; so we are "taught that the Elements, wherewith "our Flesh and Blood are nourished by "the Alteration of them, being conse-"crated by the Power of the Word, are "the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ "incarnate. The Protestant Writers observe from this Passage, as Dr. *Stillingfleet* for one, in the 35 *p.* of his first Dialogue of the Trinity and Transubstantiation compar'd: "That *Justin* really "ascribes to the same *Logos* or Word of "God, the *Body* that was in the Womb "of the Virgin, and *that Body* which is "upon the Altar; and that in like man-"ner the Holy Ghost makes the Ele-"ments to become the Body and Blood "of Christ, not by an Hypostatic Union, "but by Divine Influence and Operation. But I must tell you too, that the Fathers understood no more than *Operation* or *Influence*, by the *Word* or the *Spirit*, which they say did consecrate the Elements, and change them into the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ. So also they meant no more than *Influence*, and not a *Person*, by the *Word* or the *Holy Ghost*, which formed and sanctified the Body of Jesus Christ in the Womb of the Virgin, whereby he was properly the Son of God. For why should an Hypostatic Union be rather infer'd from this Passage, *The Word was made Flesh*, than from, *This Bread is my Body?* Either there is an Hypostatic Union of the Bread and Flesh of Christ, or there's none at all of the *Word* and *Flesh* of Christ. By the Power of the Word the Bread becomes the Body of Christ; by the same Power the Man, or the Son of *Mary*, was the Son of God, the Case is the same. What then is to be done? Why, Mysteries must be had at any rate, and the Machines of *Platonism* will bring upon the Stage as many as you please, of the grossest and most absurd: You must abandon your Reason, 'tis rashness to be inclined to hearken to Reason. Let Reason submit herself to Faith, and give her alone leave to speak. The *Papists* require us to abandon our Senses, but the *Trin—ns* will have us renounce our Reason. I am no Christian, in the Judgment of the latter; if I am not a *Brute*, a Brute did I say, if I am not a Block. Error is fruitful, and leads us into the grossest Absurdities, and 'tis the *System* of these Absurdities that is stiled *Theology*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the True Oeconomy.

'TIS certain then that the Antients were unacquainted with good Divinity, and knew less of the true Oeconomy. They believ'd their *Platonism*; whereof they were mighty fond, gave 'em great advantages over the Pagan Philosophers, and they us'd it for Reasons of Prudence: And as they were for the most part Gentiles by birth, they knew not the antient *Jewish* Oeconomy, which would have put 'em in the right way; or it may be, they were rather inclin'd to pursue their own Bigotries. Their *Oeconomy* is this: As in a Family, the Father and the Son are but One Lord, when the Son rules in the Name, and by the Authority of his Father, who has transfer'd the Exercise of that Right to him; 'tis the same thing, say they, in the Church, which is the Family of God. The Father and the Son are but One, by virtue of that Oeconomy which lodges a Power in the Son's hands, to dispose of the Father's Favours, and to exercise all Authority. 'Tis thus *Tertullian* explains the *Oeconomy*, in his Discourse against *Praxeas*. He shews him, that he does not destroy the Notion of a Monarchy, or the Government of *One* over the Universe, because the Father may exercise it by the Ministry of his Son, or such as he shall think fit to substitute in his room, as, the Angels, his Officers and Commissioners: but chiefly because the Son does nothing but at the Will of his Father, and with a Power he has receiv'd. Which is evident even from this, that he shall one day surrender it to his Father, as the Apostle tells us, and the Son himself shall be subject to him.

Lactantius pursues exactly the Steps of *Tertullian* (in *lib.* 4. *c.* 29.) "When a "Father, says he, has a Son whom he "dearly loves, giving him the Title of "Lord, with Authority; if notwithstanding, this Son continues in his "Father's House under him, it may be "said however, according to the Civil "Law, that 'tis but one House, and one "Master or Lord. So this World is but "one House or Family, and the Father, "and the Son who governs it with the "Father's Consent, are but One God; "since that *One* is *as Two*, and the *Two* "as *One*. And 'tis not to be wonder'd at, "seeing that the Son is in the Father, "because the Father loves the Son: And "the Father is in the Son, because the "Son obeys faithfully the Father's Will, "and does nothing but what the Father "wills, or commands him. God therefore, as *Tertullian* shews, may communicate his Right to all intelligent Creatures, and use in a way of condescension their Ministry, to make himself known to his Children: For as he is by his Nature incomprehensible, his Supreme Majesty being far above all his Creatures, he stoops as it were by this Method to their shallow Capacities. 'Tis thus at other times that he us'd the Ministry of Angels, and at that day the Ministry of a Man, whom he made his Son, and Heir of his House. In short, this Dispensation by his Son under the New Testament, differs not from that of the Angels in the old Administration; only in this, that the latter was temporary and provisional, but that of Christ is perpetual. The Angels exercis'd *their Oeconomy*, as Ministers commission'd and delegated; *Jesus Christ* exercises *his* in the capacity of a Son and Heir, who continues always in the House or Family. *They who know* the antient

Oeconomy to be ſuch, as St. *Paul* and St. *Stephen* have diſcover'd it to be, who acquaint us that 'twas Angels, or an Angel, which gave the Law, and ſaid, *I am the Lord*, &c. *I am the God of* Abraham, *&c.* They, I ſay, were in no danger of believing that 'twas the Incomprehenſible and Inviſible God who appear'd to the *Jews*: They were aſſur'd that it was none other than *his Angel*, *his Word*, *his Face*, or *his Perſon*, by which he made himſelf to be ſeen and underſtood; accommodating himſelf by this Diſpenſation to the Weakneſs of Men, who could not ſee God, and live. But they who comprehended not this Oeconomy of Goodneſs and Condeſcenſion, groſly fancied this Angel to be an uncreated One, as they call'd him, or the Supreme God himſelf. As if it were not the groſſeſt abſurdity to imagine, that the Supreme God had put his Name upon the Supreme God. If this Angel was really *Jehovah* by Nature, could he receive this Name from another? Has he, in his Manifeſtations, occaſion for another Name, and another Authority beſides his own?

The ſame Miſtake has happen'd with regard to the true Oeconomy by Jeſus Chriſt. The Myſtery and Secret (of the Diſpenſation) being not known, that Man has been taken for the SupremeGod, or an uncreated Angel, who was born of a Virgin, baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and inveſted with the Power of the Father, who is that Word and that Oracle, by which the Father has been pleas'd to ſpeak to us in theſe laſt days: His Oeconomy being no longer to reveal himſelf by the Angels, but in the Fleſh of his Son, the viſible Image of the Inviſible God, the *Face*, the *Character*, or the *Perſon (as he is called)* of the Subſtance of the Father. And thus we Chriſtians have but *One God*, who in the way of Oeconomy governs his Family by the Miniſtry of an Inferiour: and but *One Lord*, who by this Oeconomy manages the ſame Family in the Name of his Superiour.

There's a Tract among St. *Auſtin*'s Works, (intitul'd, *De eo quod dictum eſt, Ego ſum qui ſum*) which admirably well explains this matter, without that mixture of *Platoniſm* that *Lactantius* and *Tertullian* have, in Paſſages hereafter cited. " They, ſays that Author (making him- " ſelf one of them, who would have " it to be an Angel, that call'd himſelf " *Jehova*) ought to give us a reaſon " why he calls himſelf ſo. They anſwer, " that as 'tis ſaid in the Scripture, that " the Lord ſpoke, when the Prophet " ſpoke, not that the Prophet was the " Lord, but becauſe the Lord was in the " Prophet: So when the Lord vouch- " ſafes to ſpeak by an Angel, as by a " Prophet or an Apoſtle, this Angel may " very well be called an Angel upon his " own account, and the Lord with re- " ſpect to God dwelling in him.—The " ſame who ſpeaks in the Man, ſpeaks " in the Angel; wherefore the Angel of " God who appeared to *Moſes*, ſaid, *I* " *am what I am.* This is not the Voice of the Temple, *as he may be called*, but of him who dwelt in it. Afterwards, he having ſhewn, that the Apparitions of Angels in the Old Teſtament, cannot be underſtood of Jeſus Chriſt, he adds, " I ſuppoſe we ſhall underſtand this " matter better, by ſaying, that our Fa- " thers own'd the Lord that it was in " the Angels, or the Being who dwelt in " thoſe whom he imploy'd; and ſo give " Glory to the Lord who was perſona- " ted by the Angels, and not to the An- " gels who did perſonate him. This " Truth, ſays he, is confirm'd by the " Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, where 'tis " ſaid,——*the Word ſpoke by Angels*—— " whereby the Apoſtle teaches us, that " they were Angels who ſpoke, but that " God was heard and honoured in the " Angels. We are told the ſame truth " in the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, where St. " *Stephen* reproving the *Jews*, ſays to " 'em, *Ye ſtiff-necked*, &c. *who received* " *the Law by the diſpoſition of Angels, and* " *have not kept it.* If *Stephen* had ſaid, " of *an Angel*, and not, of *Angels*, there

" would

" would be no need of saying farther, " this is Jesus Christ, who is call'd *the* " *Angel of Great Counsel.* Call him one " Angel as much as you please, but can " one call him Angels? ——'Twas there- " fore One Angel, and the Lord in that " Angel, who said to *Moses* that ask'd " his Name, *I am what I am.*

There are the same Proofs and Arguments in St. *Austin's* 3*d* Book *de Trinit.* who observes, " That 'twas said [An- " gels] and not [one Angel] in the " Singular; that it might not be said that " it was the Son of God. And putting to himself this Objection, " Why do we " read, *God said unto* Moses, and not the " Angel said unto *Moses?* He replys, " As we say, the Judg speaks when the " Crier publishes; the Lord said, when " the Prophet spoke: So tho the Angel " spoke, the Word is ascrib'd to God, " who imploy'd him.

The same *Father* arguing strongly against those who believ'd that Jesus Christ appeared to the antient Patriarchs, has these Words, *Lib.* 16. *cap.* 29. *de Civit. Dei.* " God, says he, appeared to *A-* " *braham* in the Person of three Men, " that were without question three An- " gels, tho some imagin'd that one of " 'em was Jesus Christ: But if Jesus " Christ be pretended to be one of the " three, because *Abraham* addresses him- " self to one of 'em; why is it not " minded, that the third who staid with " *Abraham*, is called Lord, and one of " the other two who came to *Lot*, is " call'd Lord too in the Singular by the " Patriarch, when he makes answer to " the Lord, who was in the two Angels? " Therefore 'tis much more likely, that " *Abraham* understood the Lord to be in " the three Men, and that *Lot* thought " him present in the two. There's the same arguing to be met with in St. *Austin's Lib.* 2. *de Trinit. c.* 12.

This Oeconomy of Angels, as you see, gives great light to the new Oeconomy of Jesus Christ, and opens a way for our understanding it. For 'tis but to apply to this last Dispensation all that those Authors have said of the Angels, and we shall have a Key to understand the Passages of the New Testament, which speak of Jesus Christ as of God himself. We need say no more than this, that Jesus in himself was a Man, and a God with respect to God dwelling in him: So that the Man is not *the Lord Jehovah*, but *the Lord* is in the Man; and whatever Name he has, or Power he claims, 'tis not *the Voice of the Temple*, but of him who dwelt in it. In short, all that has been said of the Angel, may it not be said of the Man, except this, that there are two Natures in him? And if the Angel might assume the Names and Characters of *Jehovah*, without being concluded to be himself the *Jehovah*, why may not the like Names and Characters be given Christ, without concluding thence that he is the *Supreme God?* This Reflection sinks the great Objection of the Trinitarians, their modish Argument, I had almost said, for 'tis the beaten Track of the modern Disputants. How strange must it be, say they, for the New Testament Writers, if they did not look upon Jesus Christ to be the Supreme God, to speak of him, as of God himself? Would those Holy Men have led us into so great an Error by their extravagant Forms of speaking, if it were not so? But this ambulatory way of discoursing is pure Declamation, and may be ruin'd with ease at a blow, by making 'em sensible, that if one reasons after their fashion upon the Conduct of the Writers of the Old Testament, who have spoken of an Angel as of God himself, one may prove to 'em in their own beloved way, that *that Angel was the Supreme God.* But let 'em but once understand the Oeconomy, and they will forbear to give us any further trouble in this particular.

The End of the First Part.

THE

THE SECOND PART OF *Platonism Unveil'd.*

CHAP. I.

The Primitive Fathers deify'd Jesus Christ, *or give him the Title of a God.*

HAD the *Antients* then no true Theology? Yes, without question, and we shall infallibly find it, if we ascend a little higher than the date of *Platonism*, which afterward reduced it to that miserable state wherein I am going to represent it. And I know not how it can be done better than in the Ideas of a Learned Trinitarian, who has spoke the truth in this matter before he was well aware. 'Tis Bp *Pearson* I mean, in his *Vindication of Ignat. Epist. Part.* 2. *cap.* 1. where he tells you, " *Ignatius* was one of those " [Primitive Fathers] *qui Christum* ἐθεο- " λογεῖν; that is, who deify'd Jesus " Christ, or gave him the Title of a God; " which was also done by the *Catholick* " *Doctors*, and *Christians* of his time; " who, as *Pliny* reports it, sang Hymns " to Jesus Christ, as to a *God*: and who, " as one of the Antients tells us, in " *Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib.* 5. *c.* 28. did ce- " lebrate the Praises of Jesus Christ, " the *Word of God*, by ascribing to him " *Divinity*. But after the Philosophy of " *Plato* was received in the *Church*, the " Writers of the second and third Cen- " tury are not wont to speak of Jesus " Christ with so much simplicity, as " barely to call him *God*. This manner " of speaking of Jesus Christ has the re- " lish of St. *Ignatius* his time, who " simply or barely call'd him God. *Pho-* " *tius* reproaches *Clemens Romanus*, for " not giving the Title of God to Jesus " Christ, which so well became him. " Hence it appears that this able Critick " thought the Practice of giving Christ " the Title of a God, was peculiar to " this first Age of the Church. But the " Title [God] so often given to " Christ

" Christ by *Ignatius*, tho not with the " restriction with which 'tis done by the " succeeding Fathers, but simply and " by it self, is indeed a mark of the An- " tiquity of St. *Clemens* his Writings. " He imitates throughout the Epistles of " St. *Paul*, which had been received " from the beginning in all Churches; " but he rarely cites the Gospels, which " had been more lately received. He " has nothing in his Epistles of human " Learning, nothing that does not be- " come the Simplicity of an Apostolick " Man, and the Purity of the Gospel. " They who wrote after him usually bor- " row from the *Pagans*, and sometimes " blend their Opinions with the Chri- " stian Religion, which every one did, " according to the Principles of that " Philosophy they had imbib'd before " they embrac'd Christianity. *Ignatius* " had for a long time been a Bishop, and " became a Christian at a time when very " few of the Learned Gentiles turn'd " Christians; but we find him to be " *purely the Christian*, not form'd in the " Schools, or nurs'd up in Librarys, and " without the Sentiments of the Acade- " my or the *Portico*.

Bp *Pearson* acquaints us in this fine Pas- sage, that the Antients did *theologize* (that is, attribute Divinity to) Jesus Christ, and spoke of him as a God. This taken in a good Sense, very well explains what they understood by the title of a God, when they gave it to Jesus Christ. They meant nothing else by it, but this, that they look'd upon him as a *Divine and extraordinary Man*, and that they ho- nour'd him as such. In short, it would not be proper to say, that the Antients sang Hymns to the *Father* as to a God (*quasi Deo*) that they celebrated the Prai- ses of the *Father*, by ascribing Divinity to him, θεολογοῦντες, deifying him; this would be ridiculous Language. We don't use to speak thus of the Supreme God. These Expressions cannot suit any other Object, but one, who has not *Divinity* in an absolute Sense, but in cer- tain respects only. And 'tis upon the following accounts that Jesus Christ was spoken of as a God, either with regard to his *Nature*, being the Son of God, form'd by the Operation of his Spirit; or with regard to his *Dignity*, *since that the Father by making him Lord and Christ, had made him God*, as St. *Ambrose* reads this Passage (*Lib.* 1. *de fide ad Grat. Aug. Cap.* 7.) 'Tis true, this Term [θεολογέω] in another sense is sometimes us'd with respect to God the Father; but then it signifies nothing else, but to speak with reverence of the Deity, to celebrate his Praises, and not to *deify*, or *ascribe Divinity to him*. *Vide Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib.* 10. *cap.* 3. In the first of the Senses abovementioned, the term may be well applied to Jesus Christ, to expres the Divine Honours they gave him. For if he was Man, because a Woman was his Mother, it might also be said, that he was a God, and a God by Nature; for being born of a Virgin, he had none other Father but God (*Na- tura a nascendo.*) But he deserves this high Character yet further, forasmuch as the Father has highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name. By this Name, says *Novatian de Trinit. cap.* 17. we understand nothing else but the Name of *God*. Because he was faith- ful, says *Lactantius*, *Institut. lib.* 4. *cap.* 14. and had exactly done the Will of his Father, he received the Name (or Title) of *God*. 'Tis in this sense, that the Au- thor of the second Epistle ascrib'd to *Clemens Romanus*, exhorts us to think of Christ, *as of a God* (ὡς περὶ Θεοῦ) and he explains that by subjoining, *as of the Judg of Quick and Dead*. Shewing us thereby, that he gave him not that Name, but with re- gard to the Power the Father bestowed upon him, for his Obedience.

This is the very Theology of St. *Paul*, *Heb.* 1. who tells us, that God *made Christ more excellent than the Angels*, when he said to him, *thou art my Son*, that is plainly, that then he *made him a God*: For 'tis of his Exaltation the Apostle speaks,

ſpeaks, as appears by his Citation out of the Pſalms, *O God, thy God has anointed thee*; for ſo I read it, as the Trinitarians do. Now a God anointed and conſecrated, is nothing but a King; and conſequently Jeſus Chriſt is God with regard to the Dominion he has received from the Father over the New Creation. But with reſpect to *God the Father*, he is nothing but the Miniſter of his Will. If he be called Lord, that's no more than a Term of *Inferiority* in the New Teſtament, which ſignifies one whom the Father hath appointed his *Vicegerent*; and it cannot be underſtood otherwiſe, becauſe 'tis ſaid, *the Father has made him Lord.* St. *Paul* exactly follows this Senſe; for in all the Symbols he mentions, he takes care to aſcribe the Name of God only to the Father, excluding the Son, and ſaying, the Father is the One God, and the Son the One Lord; which St. *Paul* does always, when he ſpeaks of Father and Son together. And this is an Obſervation I had from *Tertullian*, who ſpeaks thus in his Diſpute againſt *Praxeas*: "I will not ſay *two* "*Gods* and *two Lords*, but I will follow "the Apoſtle St. *Paul*; and if the Father "and the Son are to be nam'd together, "I'll call the Father *God*, and Jeſus "Chriſt *Lord.* But if Jeſus Chriſt be "named alone, then I may call him "*God*, as the Apoſtle himſelf does, "when he ſays, *Of whom is Chriſt, who* "*is God over all things, bleſſed for ever.* But in my opinion *Novatian* expreſſes the thing more clearly in his Diſcourſe *de Trinitate, cap. ult.* "God the Father, "ſays he, is without contradiction the "God of all, and the very Principle of "his Son, whom he has made *Lord.* "But the *Son* is the God of all the Crea- "tures, *becauſe God the Father has ſet* "*him at their Head, when he made him* "*Lord.* Whence it follows that Jeſus Chriſt may well be called God, when you conſider him as the head of the New Creation, which God has ſubjected to his Dominion. But this Title vaniſhes, when the Apoſtle St. *Paul* is ſpeaking of the Father and the Son together; then the Son can have no other Character but what is fully ſignified and explain'd in the Notion of God's Miniſter and Embaſſador. So true is it, that before the only True and Supreme God, every other Deity muſt fall down, and diſappear. So that Bp *Pearſon* had reaſon to ſay, that *Ignatius* imitates St. *Paul*; for he ſays in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, that Jeſus Chriſt *was made God in the Fleſh*; which can ſignify no more than that a Man was raiſed to Divine Power or Dignity. Moreover, *Ignatius* gives Jeſus Chriſt the Title of [*God*] without any of thoſe Additions, which the Fathers after him make uſe of. He does not call Chriſt, in the *Platonick* Stile, *God the Word, a God begotten, God of God.* But if it ſhould be ſaid, *Ignatius* has not uſed the Reſtrictions of St. *Paul*, and that he calls Chriſt *God* ſimply and abſolutely; this is not true, for he calls him a *God made*, or *our God*, to ſhew, that he is not ſo, but with regard to the Power he received of his Father, and exerciſes over us.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The first Fathers did not theologize *Jesus Christ* (i. e. *ascribe Divinity to him*) *in the Sense and Terms of the* Platonic *Fathers, who lived in after Ages, but merely on the account of his miraculous Birth and Exaltation.*

THAT the most Primitive Fathers gave the Title of God to J. C. in the sense I am about to explain, will appear for three Reasons, which amount almost to Demonstration. My first Reason is taken from the manner, wherein *Clem. Rom.* and *Polycarp* speak of J. C. *Photius* says, that *Clement* has given our Saviour the Stile of High Priest, but reproaches him for not giving Christ the Characters of a God. Is it possible that *Clement* has done J. C. so great an Injury, as not to give him the Character he merits? By no means. *Photius* is mistaken, and 'tis contrary to all reason to imagine so considerable an Omission can be found in a Letter, wherein the Church at *Rome* (as *Irenæus* tells us, *lib.* 3. *c.* 2.) delivers to the Church of *Corinth*, the Tradition she had received from the Apostles. It must be said therefore that this great Critick [*Photius*] did not take notice, that in the Apostolic Stile of St. *Clement*, the calling J. C. our High Priest and Pontif is the same thing, as to call him our God; agreeable to the Doctrine of St. *Paul*, who teaches us, that when God rais'd his *Messias* to the Honour of the High Priesthood, 'twas then he said unto him, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.* So that there's nothing in my Opinion more reasonable and just, than the Remark of *Grotius*, *Epist.* 347. *Par.* 2. who proves the Antiquity of this Epistle of St. *Clement* for this very reason, because it does not speak of J. C. in the *Platonic* Way and Manner, as was done by others in after Ages, but in a Simplicity or Plainness, altogether as St. *Paul* had spoken.

As to St. *Polycarp*, one finds in his Epistle the same Character of Simplicity and Plainness, as in St. *Clement* aforesaid, which *Photius* takes notice of in the place forecited. And St. *Irenæus*, *l.* 3. *c.* 3. gives *Polycarp*'s Epistle this fair Character, *That 'tis a most compleat and very proper Instruction in the Faith, and Doctrine of Truth.* Yet one meets with no *Platonic* Titles in this excellent Epistle. In vain will you look for these Phrases, *the* [*Eternal*] *Word, the Pre-existence of the Son of God, the Generation from the Womb of the Father*, &c. Nay you will not find in this Epistle, so much as the Name of God applied to Christ. Where then, with respect to Christ, are *Polycarp*'s Characters of the true Faith and Doctrine? Why they are in those Elogies, which *Polycarp* often repeats, as that *Jesus Christ is the everlasting High Priest, that he is the Son of God, that the Father hath rais'd him from the Dead, and made him to sit at his right Hand.* For pray observe St. *Polycarp*'s Creed of the *Divinity of the Father and the Son*: "To pass over (says he) the Mistake "and Babble of some Persons; let us "believe in him who rais'd our Lord "Jesus Christ from the Dead, and hath "crowned him with Glory, &c. Let us "keep our selves clear of the vain and "false Doctrine of those Persons afore-

" said, and keep close to the antient " Tradition and Word, which was left " us from the beginning. In which Passage this Holy Person, being willing to put the *Philippians* in mind of the vain Discourse of some, and to guide 'em to the source of true Tradition, which he makes to consist in believing J. C. was deified by his Father, he meant no doubt to bring them off from the vain Philosophy of *Plato*'s *Second God*, and to engage them to that Divinity of J. C. which is founded on his Exaltation. For 'tis clear that *Polycarp* calls here by the Name of true and antient Tradition, this summary of the Faith expressed in these Terms, *Believe ye in him who hath raised Jesus Christ our Lord from the Dead*, &c. This Symbol is agreeable to that of the Apostles, and is directly opposite to that vain Doctrine he was about to condemn. And this Symbol insisting upon nothing but the Glory J. C. acquired by his Sufferings, it must necessarily follow, that under the Name of Babble or vain Doctrine, St. *Polycarp* censures that vain and false Glory, which *Platonizing* Christians ascribed to Christ by their fancied Pre-existence. In short, instead of that unintelligible Babble of other Fathers, and I know not what Jargon, of a Son of God begotten before all Ages, and emanated from the Divine Mind, which is exactly the reverse of the Gospel; *Polycarp* here speaks of none other Son of God, but one who is an everlasting High Priest, rais'd to a Sovereign Glory; which is the real Gospel, the Tradition of the Apostles, and the antient Theology.

My second Proof is drawn from the Confession of the antient Martyrs; there can be no doubt but that those faithful Witnesses of J. C. gave his Person the most illustrious and most honourable Testimony that they could, and that they heighten'd their *Theology* as far as they could, without the hazard of their Faith. Let us hear therefore what is said of 'em in the Acts of those Martyrs: St. *Polycarp* invokes a Trinity, but what Trinity? three Persons and one God, as 'tis expressed, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? God forbid. He, as *Euseb.* tells us, *Hist. lib. 4. c. 16. invoked God the Father thro his Everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord, in the Holy Spirit.* Who sees not that he gave Glory to J. C. and that he deified him, by stiling him the everlasting High Priest? If he could have said any thing greater, he would have said it.

Rusticus Præfect of *Rome*, demanded of *Justin Martyr* what was the Christian Religion. This Confessor answered, " We believe one only God, who is the " Creator of all things visible and invisi- " ble; and we confess that J. C. our " Lord is the Son of God, foretold by " the Prophets, and who shall come one " day to judg the World. Observe here such a Son of God, whose whole Pre-existence consists in his being foretold by the Prophets, and whose real Greatness is not, his having created, but because he will judg the World. This Creed is Apostolic, and has the Air and Simplicity of the first Ages. One may dextrously philosophize upon the Christian Religion, and speak in the *Platonic* way in ones Closet, as *Justin* has often done: but when he was to make a sincere Confession before the Magistrate, and to seal it with his own Blood, *Plato* has nothing to do with it, the Confession is made with Simplicity and in conformity to the Holy Scriptures: then 'tis no longer *Justin* the *Philosopher*, but *Justin* the *Confessor* and the *Martyr*.

Lastly *Hegesippus* acquaints us, in *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 2. c. 23.* that *James the Just* being conjur'd by the *Jews*, to declare to them what he thought of *Jesus*: " Why, says he, do you put this " Question to me concerning Jesus the " Son of Man? He sits in Heaven at the " Right Hand of the Power of God, " and he must come again in the Clouds " of Heaven. This Holy Man, says the

Histo-

Historian, was a Witness very credible both with *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that Jesus was really the Christ. His Confession is not long, however it comprehends that which may be said to be the most august and considerable, and confirms all the Theology which concerns the Persons of Christ.

To these Testimonies of antient Martyrs, give me leave to add another Instance, which is not much from the purpose. *Eusebius* tells us in his *Eccles. Hist. lib.* 1. *c.* 13. "That *Thaddeus* going to "see King *Agbarus*, he preached to the "King J. C. our Lord and our God, "the Messias, or the Sent of God. *Valesius* remarks in his Notes, that the Word [God] is wanting in good Copies, which are in other Passages confirmed by *Nicephorus* and *Ruffinus*: "And "I don't think, says Monsr. *Valois*, any "one dares deny, but that the Reading, "wherein the Word *God* is wanting, is "more agreeable to the Text: For 1*st* "the Antients us'd not that Word but of "the Father only. 2*ly*. If *Thaddeus* "speaking to a King, who was a new "Convert to and weak in the Faith, "had call'd J. C. God, this might have "perplexed him, and made him to think "that two Gods were preached to him.

'Tis plain and fair dealing to affirm, the Antients by no means gave the Name of God to J. C. but 'tis mincing to say that they did it not in the case of weak Christians, this is a mere Evasion. For why was not the like Tenderness us'd towards others in the following Ages? Is it because there was less danger of spreading *Polytheism?* Were not the *Catechumens* both weak and Novices too, whom the *Pantænusses*, the *Clements Alexandrinusses*, the *Origens*, and the *Cyrils* taught the second God of *Plato*, with all the Niceties of the mystic Theology?

Be that as it will, it appears from this Passage and many others, that one has not good ground to trust much to the Testimonies of the Antients, where the Name of God is given to J. C. The Word God has been inserted in such Places by *Trinitarian Copists*, and without doubt many other Terms have been retrench'd, as they thought fit. What an Abyss of Uncertainty is here then! Besides, Monsr. *Du Pin* believes this History of *Thaddeus* to be fabulous (*See his Biblioth. Tom.* 1. *p.* 1.) *Eusebius* has amassed all sorts of Memoirs without much Judgment: He often misunderstands the Authors he cites, sometimes he corrupts them to reconcile them to the *Arian Scheme*. What endless Uncertainties must this occasion! Monsr. *Valois* himself falls under the same Guilt he taxes in others; and we must not only be upon our Guard against the Fraud of *Copists*, but of *Translators* too. Observe how he reads the Text, in the eleventh Chapter of the eighth Book of *Eusеb. Eccles. Hist.* "The Martyrs of *Phrygia*, "as he makes the Historian word it, cal- "led upon Jesus Christ, who is God o- "ver all. Now these Words [*God over all*] are not found in the Greek of *Christopherson*, nor in the Latin Version of *Ruffinus*, nor in *Cousin*'s French Version. And *Valois* takes no notice whence he had this Reading, which in other Places is so contrary to the Doctrine of *Eusebius* himself, and to other Invocations to be met with in great Numbers in his History: the ordinary Form thereof is, to invoke him, who is God over all, by or through J. C. our Lord; and in short is contrary to the Usage and constant Practice of the Primitive Church, as we are going to shew in our third Proof.

CHAP. III.

A Continuation of the Proofs, that the first Fathers did not deify Christ upon any other account, but that of his miraculous Birth and Exaltation.

I Affirm in the third Place, that the Antients grounded their Deification of J. C. upon nothing beyond his *being born* of a Virgin, and his Exaltation in the highest Heavens; and that for this decisive Reason, *because they held all those were Hereticks, who gave J. C. the Title of God over all.* To this purpose speaks the Author of the *Apostolic Constitutions, lib. 6. c. 26.* "There are "some, says he, who have the Impiety, "or are so impious as to say, that *J. C.* "*is God over all*; fancying that he is the "Father himself, and at the same time "both Son and Paraclet. Can any thing be conceived more execrable? Upon this Passage Monsr. *Daille* in his *Pseudepigr. Apost.* blesses himself, and says, Then was St. *Paul* an Heretick, and the whole Church is heretical, which constantly maintain'd against the *Arians*, that J. C. was God over all. So that heretofore 'twas *Heresy* to affirm J. C. to be God over all, tho now-a-days 'tis *Orthodoxy*. But that Christ was the Father himself, and the Son and Paraclet too, is a consequence drawn from their Doctrine, which they rejected without doubt, as 'tis disavowed by others in these days. The distinction of Persons was not then in fashion, which is nothing but three different Names for the same thing, as that word is now understood. For it must signify with some nothing but a *Mode*, a Relation, a *nescio quid*, which are words that signify nothing less than what we commonly call a Person. Wherefore if the consequence above be good against the antient Hereticks, 'tis e'en as good against the modern *Sabellians*.

After the Author of the Constitutions I place *Ignatius*, who in his Epistle to those of *Tarsus*, calls those Hereticks Ministers of Satan, who held these two extremes; the one, that J. C. is God over all; the other, that he was but a mere Man. In his Epistle to the *Philippians*, he explains wherein Orthodoxy truly consists, *viz.* in believing Christ born of God by a Virgin; for not only they who believed him a mere Man, denied this Truth, but *Ignatius* farther insinuates, that this Truth was denied no less even by such, who believed him to be *God over all.* "How, says he to them, "do you not believe that J. C. was "born of a Virgin, but that *he is God* "*over all*, I would say, him who can "do all things? Tell me then I pray, "who is he that sent him? To whose "Will is he subject? And whose Law "did he fulfil? How dare you maintain "that the Christ was by no means gene-"rated, that the Lawgiver is unbegotten, "and that he who is without begin-"ning was nail'd to a Cross? This Pas-"sage is the clearest Proof. The Generation of J. C. by the Power of the Holy Ghost, was the true Theology concerning his Person; and those who held him to be the Supreme God, contested this miraculous Generation, pretending that he was unbegotten. For this reason *Ignatius* adds a little after, "This is not "he who is God over all, but the Son, "meaning thereby, one who was begot-"ten,

" ten. *Daille* exclaims upon the Paſſage aforeſaid, ſaying, " *Ignatius* diſ-" tinguiſhes the Son from that God who " is over all, which is Blaſphemy. And he has reaſon (to ſpeak in the Orthodox way) becauſe the Character of a God over all, is not properly of the Perſon, but an Attribute of the Subſtance. So that it cannot be taken from J. C. without robbing him of the Divine Nature and Subſtance.

It will be ſaid perhaps, that the *Conſtitutions* are not *Clement*'s, and that the two Epiſtles under the Name of *Ignatius* are falſly aſcribed to him. But this is trifling as to our Queſtion; for be it as it will, my Citations are from Authors of great Antiquity, and who paſs for *Trinitarians*: they are Witneſſes of the Faith in that Age wherein they lived, and whoſe Teſtimony conſequently ought not to be ſuſpected by us Moderns. So much the rather, becauſe the ſame is confirmed by a Doctor of great Name and Reputation. For is it not well known, that *Origen* attacked the ſame Error, in his 32 *Tom.* on St. *John*, and in his eighth Book againſt *Celſus*? Monſ. *Huet* in his *Quæſtiones Origen.* 2. is much ſcandalized, that *Origen* ſhould ſay, " Some maintained that Chriſt was God " over all; This Propoſition, ſaith *Huet*, " is true and Orthodox, with reſpect " to the Divine, not the Human Na-" ture. *Origen* on the contrary, denies our Saviour to be God over all, and proves him to be inferiour to the Father by this Reaſon, becauſe the Father is God over all. He takes away then from the Divine Nature of J. C. the Character of ſupreme Divinity, and aſcribes it to the Father. But let us hear *Origen* himſelf: " I mean, ſays he, that there " are *ſome among the great Number* of " Believers, who widely differing from " the Opinion of others, *raſhly main-* " *tain that our Saviour is God over all:* " *for our parts we have no regard for that* " *Opinion, believing theſe Words of our* " *Saviour himſelf*, viz. *The Father who* " *ſent me is greater than I.* 'Tis trifling to anſwer here, that *Origen* meant ſome Hereticks, who held that J. C. was the Father. This takes not off from the Force of the Argument; for *Origen* maintains, that the Son is not the Father, for this reaſon, becauſe he is not as the Father, God over all; and becauſe Chriſt himſelf confeſſes, that the Father is greater than himſelf, ſuppoſing that it was the Father alone who had this ſupreme Prerogative.

To conclude, Dr. *Bull* in his *Judicium Eccleſ. Cath.* and his *Defender* in his *Fathers vindicated*, citing the famous Paſſage of *Juſtin*, when that Father conſents to a Toleration of the *Joſephites* (who believed Jeſus to be the Son of *Joſeph*, yet nevertheleſs believed him to be Chriſt) Theſe Authors, I ſay, inſiſt much upon the oppoſition which *Juſtin Martyr* makes between τινὲς and πλείονες, *i. e.* the ſmall number of *Joſephites*, and the many who oppos'd 'em. Now we have our Turn to boaſt in this Paſſage of *Origen*, and may take the ſame Advantage; they who believed J. C. to be God over all, were but the τινὲς, or ſome Perſons; and by conſequence they were the *Hereticks*, becauſe the few are always ſuch. But for thoſe who oppoſed this Error, they beyond contradictions were the Orthodox, becauſe they were the πλῆθος, i. e. the *Multitude*.

CHAP.

CHAP IV.

General Remarks upon the forecited Authorities of the Fathers.

IT remains that I make two Remarks upon these Passages in general; one is, that since 'twas Heresy in these first times of Christianity, to affirm that J. C. is the supreme God; it follows that Orthodoxy was either the Opinion of *Arius*, which will not be granted, or that of the *Socinians*, which ought to be admitted, since 'tis taken from the Scriptures, by the Confession of the *Trinitarians*.

The other Remark is, since such Fathers condemn this Expression as heretical, *viz.* that the Lord Jesus is God over all, without taking any notice of the Objection now drawn from that Passage in *Rom.* 9. 5. which one wou'd think was very natural for them to have solv'd; it follows that in their time either they gave those Words another sense, or that they read it otherwise than we do at this day.

Supposing then, as I am about to demonstrate, that to ascribe to J. C. the Prerogative of the Father, *viz.* of being God over all, was Heresy in the first Ages of the Church; One sees clearly in what sense a Remark of *Sulpitius Severus* may be true, which was this, that almost all Christians in *Palestine* in the time of *Adrian*, believed Jesus Christ to be a God. Not the supreme God, as *Sulpitius* pretends, nor a God begotten a little before the Creation, as *Eusebius* would have us believe, by perverting some Passages of the *Antients*, and by making them to serve his own Prejudices. Not, I say once more, the supreme God; this would have been a damnable Error. What then? Why *a God*, because he was received or owned not only as a Just Man and a Prophet, but as the Christ of God, whom he made *Lord*, giving him a Name above every Name, the Name of God. Note here the manner of Christ's Deification. In short, one cannot believe without Heresy, according to these Primitive Doctors, that he was a mere Man, having no more Authority than other Holy Persons. One cannot therefore better state the Orthodoxy of those venerable Doctors, than in avoiding these two Extremes. And we find it to be so, in the most famous and most antient Monument of the Christian Church, I mean the Apostles Creed, which says, I believe in J. C. the only Son [of God] our Lord; how I pray is he God's only Son? Why that's explain'd in these Words, he was conceiv'd by the Holy Ghost, and born of a Virgin, his miraculous Generation and Nativity made him a God: and how he became our Lord, appears in these Words, he was raised from the Dead and ascended into Heaven, whence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead; his Obedience and his illustrious Vertue rais'd him to this supreme Dignity. These two Articles make up the whole of the antient Theology, with respect to the Person of Christ; but the latter of the two without dispute was the most important, and is only insisted on for our Salvation. J. C. never preach'd to the *Jews* his miraculous Birth, but he always proved his Mission from Heaven by Miracles wrought publickly and openly. The Apostles in the History we have of their first Sermons, have spoken nothing more; they insist not on any other Topic concerning their Divine Master, but those

those of his Resurrection and Exaltation. St. *Paul* lost his Life for preaching that last Mystery. But in how many Passages does he press, as essential and necessary to Salvation, the Belief of Christ's Exaltation? *If thou confessest with thy Mouth, that Jesus is the Lord, and believest with thy Heart, that God hath rais'd him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved*, Rom. 10. 9.

The earliest Antiquity was of the same Judgment, as it appears by two Instances: The first is that of *Victor* Bp of *Rome*, who excommunicated *Theodotus*, altho he believed J. C. was born of a Virgin by the Holy Spirit, because (as is remarked by the Author of a Catalogue of Heresies, suppos'd to be *Tertullian*) *Theodotus* believed Christ to be a *mere Man*, who had no other Advantage or Prerogative above other Men, but what he had from his own Righteousness. This is plainly to say, that tho he believed him a Man extraordinary in his Birth and his Vertue, yet he did not therefore believe him to be that Christ and that Lord, whom the Father had rais'd above all other Men, and even above Angels; whereby *Theodotus* rejected a fundamental Article of Christianity.

The other Instance is that of *Justin Martyr*, in his Dialogue with *Typho*. He there owns for his Brethren, that there were some Christians of his time, who held for a Truth that J. C. was but a mere Man, the Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, but however believed him to be the Christ: which plainly intimates, that they did not look upon him barely as a Prophet, who only preached Righteousness to the *Jews*; but besides, they thought him to be the *Messias* sent to all Nations, and the Lord whom God had made such over all Men; and in this they retain'd the fundamental Article of Christianity.

After this Opinions changed, as *Pearson* beforecited has remarked: "Those, "says he, who wrote just after the purer "Ages of the Church, borrowed the "Sentiments of the *Pagans*, and min-"gled them with the Christian Religion, "following those Principles of Philoso-"phy, which they had imbibed before "they embraced the Christian Religion. That was the source of the ensuing Evils; the Exaltation of our Saviour, which had been esteemed the chief point in Christianity, as we have seen in the Writings of *Polycarp* and *Clement*, was no longer regarded as such: But his miraculous Birth was the only Article insisted upon. The Reason whereof is plainly this, that in their Disputes with the Philosophers, they did not so much insist upon the High Offices of the Messias, as upon the Excellency of his Nature and Person; for they wanted a Parallel with the *emanated Word* of the Philosophers. And indeed this miraculous Birth was much more sutable to the Principles of *Plato*'s *Philosophy*, which enter'd into the Christian Religion, upon the Conversion of some Learned Men: An holy Spirit coming down from Heaven upon a Virgin, and begetting in her that holy Man, who from that is stiled the Son of God: An Event, I say, so extraordinary as this, was without doubt the most proper thing in all that Gospel, to serve for a Foundation of the *Platonic* Doctrine; 'twas easy, with a little philosophic Dexterity, to find in it the *second God*, the *begotten Son*, the *Son of God*, the *Word*, the *Mind* or *Understanding*; and in one word, the whole *Train* of the *Platonic Preexistence*.

Ignatius, *Justin Martyr* and *Irenæus* began with an Accommodation of these Terms more or less. You may see in their Writings, not that naked downright *Platonism*, as one sees in *Origen* for example, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*; but *Platonism* in disguise, which appeared in the Mask of Christian Religion. *Plato*'s Logos or Word, and the Holy Spirit which overshadowed the Virgin *Mary*, always keep company in their Writings. For this Passage in St. *Luke* [*The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee*, &c.] one shall

shall meet with blended throughout with their starch'd and most affected Speculations. The *Platonic* Opinion did not enter all at once into Christianity, which then would have been sensible of the Innovation, but crept in by little and little, under the Mask of *Explication* and *Illustration*. Any change in the Christian Religion was not intended hereby, but to set it off to the best advantage, and make it fit for the relish of the Philosophers. And hereupon they went on philosophizing upon a point incontestably Christian, *viz.* upon the Sovereign Power that form'd the Body wherein Jesus dwelt, till they quite lost the sight of it. The Philosophers could not endure that so plain a Doctrine as that of J. C. should pretend to combat their Notions. They always twitted the Christians with the Unskilfulness, Coarseness and Ignorance of their Writers. The Christians, asham'd of this Reproach, endeavour'd to obviate it. Some coming fresh from the *Pagan* Schools, made a show of their Learning, and mingled it with the Christian Doctrine. Others applied themselves so well to human Learning, to Rhetorick and Philosophy, that they excelled and rifled the *Pagans*, but at the expence of the Christian Religion, the Simplicity of which they alter'd.

I say, to obviate the Reproach aforesaid, they made use of two Expedients: first they dressed up supposititious Pieces, containing the most subtil and most refin'd Philosophy; and publish'd them under the Names of *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, *Clemens Romanus*, and many others. To make it appear that the first Preachers of Christianity were not so illiterate as was supposed, this very Observation is made even by Monsr. *Daille* and Dr. *Cave*. Yet those spurious Pieces, published for the Credit of the pretended Authors among the Pagans, under great Names, had this effect besides, that they adulterated the Christian Religion. In the second place, those platonizing Doctors corrupted the Simplicity of the Gospel by their Allegories, and other Helps to Contemplation, to heighten the Christian Doctrine by sublime Terms and profound Notions. Thus by the force of a philosophic Management, of the Doctrine of the Generation of the Son of God by the Operation of the Holy Spirit, this Point at last was changed into that of a Generation of *Plato*'s Word or *Logos*. To pass for the present the consideration of those Objections, pretended to have great weight, which are taken from the suppos'd Impossibility of a change in the Tradition of the Church, as the *Author of the Fathers vindicated* argues; 'I must tell him, 'tis in vain for him to attack us with those very Weapons, with which he has already been beaten in *France*. We will make our Defence at the same rate he has done his on another occasion. *Justin Martyr*, if you please, shall not be the very Innovator, who changed the Tradition of the Church all at once; 'tis not in that manner Error is equally introduc'd, that's agreed. But you must own, whether you will or not, that *Justin* was the first who brought in the new Mode of expressing himself in matters of Faith, the first who made use of a Stile that was strange and unknown to his Predecessors, *Clemens*, *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, and *Polycarp*; and who spoke a philosophic Jargon, wherein appears throout the swelling Notions and Expressions of *Plato*, and nothing of the Simplicity of J. C. But to what purpose was this new Language? unless it was to begin the Innovation, under colour of *Embellishing*, of *Accommodation*, and more ample *Explication*; and that this was for prudential Reasons, and for the purpose of the Divine Oeconomy. This is the very way that Error has always taken. The Doctrine of *Mahomet*, which establish'd it self by force, was indeed made, and introduced all at once by one Man alone: But the Doctrine of Antichrist took time, and came in by degrees; it began with the Imposture and Fineness of Philosophy, and us'd no Force nor Vio-

Violence, till by its Seducements it had gain'd the upper hand. *Juſtin Martyr* at firſt imploy'd his Philoſophy in the Cauſe, and Pope *Victor* afterwards his Tyranny: and thus you ſee how the Innovation was compleated; it came in, as the Proverb has it, like a Fox, and reign'd like a Lion.

CHAP. V.

Further Reflections upon the forementioned Paſſage in Bp Pearſon's *Vindication of* Ignatius, *Part* 2. *c.* 1.

HItherto I have conſidered this remarkable Paſſage in Bp *Pearſon*, only with regard to this particular deſign, which was to ſhew in what ſenſe Jeſus Chriſt was deify'd, or ſpoken of as a God among the firſt Chriſtians. I have yet three further Reflections, which have a more general aſpect upon the whole extent of this Controverſy.

1ſt *Remark.*

My 1ſt Remark is upon the Paſſage in *Pliny* concerning the Worſhip of the antient Chriſtians, who, as he relates it, *ſang Hymns to Jeſus Chriſt, as to a God.* Now here I ſay, that *Pliny* ſpeaks of the Chriſtians in his *Pagan Stile*; that 'tis the Language of an Idolater, ſo that the leaſt conſequence cannot be drawn for the Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt in the modern Senſe of it; for he ſpeaks after the ſame manner of Chriſt, as if he had been to ſpeak of his *Deify'd Heroes.* See *Biblioth. Univ. Tom.* 10. *p.* 346,347. Monſ. *Le Clerc* has well obſerv'd in his *Rules of Criticiſm*, that *all ſorts of Authors are wont to expreſs the Sentiments and Behaviour of the Perſons whoſe Hiſtory they write, in terms current and received, at the time of their writing, and in the Country where they liv'd:* And that, if this be not well minded, one may eaſily miſtake the Phraſe of one Country for another, and confound their Meaning.

2d *Remark.*

Bp *Pearſon* pretends it was cuſtomary in the firſt Age to call Jeſus Chriſt *God.* Monſieur *Valois* maintains on the contrary, that the Antients did not uſually aſcribe that Name but to the Father only. 'Tis not difficult to determine which of theſe two Criticks was in the right. *Pearſon*'s Remark has no other ground but the Stile of *Ignatius* alone, which is the very thing in queſtion: Whereas *Valeſius* his Obſervation is founded upon the conſtant Uſage of the Fathers in the firſt Century, *viz. Clemens, Barnabas, Hermas* and *Polycarp*, who moſt certainly have never given the Name of God to Jeſus Chriſt in the Writings which are inconteſtably theirs. So that ſince *Ignatius* has done otherwiſe, ſuppoſing the Epiſtles are truly his, it muſt be ſaid, according to *Valeſius* his Obſervation, that *Ignatius* did vary from the Practice in his time; or that the word [*God*] has been foiſted in by the *Copiſts*, as the Hiſtory of *Thaddeus.*

3d *Remark.*

My laſt Remark is of much greater importance than the two former, and intirely deciſive in this Controverſy: For in this Paſſage of Bp *Pearſon* you may take notice, that what he affirms will effectually and at once defend all kinds of Unitarian Hereticks, from the formidable Authority of the *Platonizing* Fathers, with which they are always baited. The Fathers who wrote after *Ignatius*, ſays *Pearſon*, the Doctors of the 2*d* and 3*d* Century, are uſed to borrow their thoughts from the Pagans, and ſometimes to blend 'em with the Chriſtian Religion. Take notice that al this is ſaid with regard to

Jesus Christ; and remember too that the second Century is the fatal *Epocha*, wherein the Church lost the Purity and Simplicity of her Principles; which happened, as *Hegesippus* observes, soon after the Death of the Apostles, when *Platonism* prevail'd. To come to matter of Fact, the Fathers of the first and second Century, namely, the *Justins*, the *Athenagoraſſes*, the *Theophiluſſes*, the *Irenæuſſes*, the *Clemens Alexandrinuſſes*, the *Tertullians*, the *Origens*, &c. these Fathers, who wrote after *Ignatius*, have mingled Pagan Notions with the Christian Religion: therefore those Fathers ought not to be heard in this Controversy, as good Witnesses of the Christian Faith; and as to the point of Christ's Divinity, ought to be regarded as Demi-Pagans. The *Unitarian Hereticks* likewise ought not in reason to be attack'd with their Authority: and consequently the Notion of Christ's Divinity ought to be reduc'd to the state and account given of it by the Writers of the first Century, who were not form'd in the Schools, nor bred up in Libraries, who were not imbu'd with the Sentiments of the *Academy* or the *Portico*. In fine, every Sentence and Expression in their Writings that regards Christ's Divinity, and has not the Purity and Simplicity of the first Century, cannot be look'd upon as any other but as a smatch of *Paganism*.

CHAP. VI.

The Theology concerning the Word (*or* Logos) *is nothing else but a Philosophick Speculation, partly grounded upon the Divine Power that entred and dwelt in the* Messiah *at the moment of his Conception.*

TO prove this, that the Theology concerning the Word (or *Logos*) is nothing else but a philosophick Notion, partly grounded upon the Divine Power that enter'd and dwelt in the Messiah at the moment of his Conception, there's nothing more to be considered, than, 1*st*. That the most antient Authors go no further in search after Christ's Divinity, than his Birth of a *Virgin*. *Ignatius*, in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, satisfies us of this Truth. "There is, says he, but one Physician, "who is of Flesh and of Spirit, be- "gotten and unbegotten, made a God "in the Flesh, the true Life in Death, "born of *Mary* and of God. This Father arguing against the *Josephites*, does not oppose to their Error the eternal Generation of the Son of God, but his Birth of a Virgin by the Holy Spirit. I would say, he does not speak of a *God incarnate*, but of a Man who was made God in the Flesh, that is to say, who was born a God, or made a God by his Birth, because he was born of God, and of the Virgin *Mary*. In this Sense *Ignatius* assures us, that our Physician is partly Flesh, and partly Spirit; since by his wonderful Conception he partook equally of the fleshly [or Human,] and of the Spiritual and Divine Nature. He adds, this *Physician is begotten, and unbegotten*; since he was begotten of a Woman, like other Men; and at the same time unbegotten, having no Man for his Father. Lastly, he says, that this Physician was born of the Virgin *Mary*, and of God; which explains all the rest, for 'tis as much as to say, that he was born of the Virgin *Mary* by the Power of the Spirit of God, and not by her Intercourse with *Joseph*: This word [*God*,] as you may see, being there manifestly oppos'd to [Man,] or to [*Joseph*.] "Jesus "Christ our God, as *Ignatius* further "says

" says in the same Epistle, was conceiv-
" ed of the Virgin *Mary*, according to
" the Divine Dispensation (κατ' οἰκονο-
" μίαν Θεοῦ) being in truth of the Seed
" of *David*, but by the intervention of
" the Holy Spirit. Where one sees the
same Antithesis continued, which we obs-
erv'd in the foregoing Passage; that is,
between God and *Mary*, and between the
Seed of *David*, and the Power of the
Spirit. The true Oeconomy, according
to *Ignatius*, is not the Incarnation of the
Supreme God, but the miraculous Con-
ception of the Messiah, who is both God
and Man, by his Birth of a Woman by
the Power of God. This is a Physician,
who was made God in the Flesh,
being born of the Virgin *Mary*, and of
God; of *David*, and of the Holy Spirit.
This is the true Divine Dispensation,
this is the great Mystery of the Chri-
stians.

The same Author, in his Epistle to the Church of *Smirna*, presents us with ano-
ther Passage suitable to this occasion: For
thus he speaks of Jesus Christ, " That
" he was truly of the Race of *David*
" (or the Son of *David*) according to
" the Flesh; but the Son of God, ac-
" cording to the Will and Power of
" God, in that he was truly born of a
" Virgin. Monsieur *Daillé* having mark'd
out this Passage of *Ignatius* as Heretical,
since he makes the Generation of the
Son to depend on the Will and Power of
the Father; Bp *Pearson* gives this account
of it in his *Vindic. Ignat. Par.* 2. *c.* 9.
" That 'tis clear this Father does not
" speak of the Eternal Generation of
" the Son, but of his Incarnation, which,
" as the World owns, was by the Will
" and Power of God. For which rea-
" son, adds *Pearson*, the Interpolator
" having a mind to pervert these Words
" by applying 'em to the Divine Nature,
" he was forc'd to change their Order.
'Tis sufficient, that this Learned Person
affirms, that in this Passage there's no-
thing of an eternal Generation; and that
Ignatius speaks not but of Jesus Christ,
in allusion to the Words of the Angel,
The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, &c.
Wherefore that which, &c. *shall be called the Son of God.* 'Tis enough that he
owns, this Conception was so wonderful,
as to intitle Jesus Christ to the Name and
Dignity of the Son of God. As for the
word [Incarnation,] which *Ignatius* does
not use, we'll excuse it in *Pearson*; 'tis
a Term of art unknown to the good Fa-
ther, and signifies in the *Platonizing Di-
vinity*, that the Supreme God was made
Man. And if it be certain, that *Ignatius*
did not speak in this Passage but of the
miraculous Conception of Jesus Christ,
can it be doubted whether he discours'd
upon that same Subject, and by no means
on the eternal Generation, in the two other
Passages I am about to cite, and which
are very like to this here? In the mean
time Dr. *Bull* has the rashness to produce
them for a Proof of that which *he* calls
the two Natures of our Saviour, that is,
that of a Supreme God, and that of a
Man like one of us (in his *Judic. Eccles.*
p. 5, *& seq.*). Who would not wonder
at the Artifice of Divines, who have the
Skill to pervert these Passages to serve
their Notion of the Eternal Generation?
We can furthermore shew you the Foot-
steps of this plain antient Divinity in o-
ther of the Fathers who *Platonize* more
than *Ignatius*, as in *Justin* and *Irenæus*.
But we shall have another opportunity of
examining the Theology of those two
Fathers; at present the Passage in *Igna-
tius* will suffice, whereby to judg of the
rest.

The only Reflection that remains, is,
that *Ignatius* having so often distinguish'd
between the *Son born of God and of* Mary,
and the *Son born of* David *and the Holy
Spirit*; 'tis upon this Foundation that
the distinction of the two Natures in
Christ, is founded in the true sense of
it: or if you please, his twofold Filia-
tion, the one Divine, the other Human.
" He is the Son of God, says the Au-
" thor of the *Questions and Answers to*
" *the Orthodox* (*Quest.* 66.) in that he

'was born of the Holy Spirit; and the 'Son of *Joseph*, in that he was born of '*Joseph*'s Wife. 'Tis in this the Mystery consists: He was born of *Joseph*'s Wife, this is but a *legal Filiation* with regard to *Joseph*; and he was born of the Spirit of God, this is a proper and *natural Filiation* with respect to God. So that in this last respect, it may be said, that he is truly *Light of Light*, and *God of God*. I have already said it, and I'll repeat it again: The Fathers thought that the Holy Spirit, which overshadowed the Virgin *Mary*, in some sort united it self to the Flesh of Jesus Christ, so as never to be separated from it; and 'tis upon this perpetual *Inhabitation* that they have *philosophized* in their manner, upon the two Natures of our *Saviour*. *Grotius* aim'd at this Theology in one of his Notes upon *Colos.* 1. 19. "The *Plenitude* of Di-"vine Vertues, says he, dwelt in Jesus "Christ; that is to say, 'twas perpetually "and inseparably united, and not by in-"tervals, as in the Prophets. This is what's called the *Hypostatick Union*: This in effect, is the personal Union of the Divine with the Human Nature, even this *Shekinah*, or this perpetual Inhabitation of the Spirit of God in Jesus Christ. To go farther in quest of other Mysteries, betrays a Vanity of Mind. The Fathers compriz'd all in what I have said, and upon it they built those profound Speculations with which their Books are fill'd. If at some times they went farther, and spoke of the *Word* in a manner not agreeable with the ground I have laid down, 'tis because they have suffer'd themselves to be surpriz'd, and their eyes to be dazled with their *Platonick* Philosophy. The *Wonderful* and the *Sublime* are very tempting Schemes. These *Platonists* are a sort of Philosophers, or rather of Divines, who have made a Voyage to the *World of Ideas*; and some Christians are so weak as to swallow all their Visions for Mysteries. But let us always remember, for the honour of the Fathers, that how far soever they wander'd in their large Field of *Platonick* Contemplation, they never advanc'd so far as to equal the Divinity of the *Word* with that of his Father. *Origen*, who is one of them that went farthest, never carried his Theology to that extreme. Whatever lofty Idea he had of the Son, he declares however, in his 14*th* Tome on St. *John*, "That the Son "was so much below the Father, as he "and the Holy Spirit were above the "most noble Creatures. Go we now after this, and say, that the Fathers held the necessity of believing that the Supreme God was incarnate, and that Jesus Christ is that Supreme God. Monsieur *Huet* had good reason to acknowledg, upon this Passage of *Origen*, that it could not be excus'd; and to attempt to find an Orthodox Sense in it, could not be consistent with Sincerity or Honesty.

CHAP. VII.

The same Proof continued, together with an Examination of the Sense of Antient Creeds *thereupon.*

WE have no more to do, but to consider the antient Creeds, and to compare those which were form'd upon the *Apostolick Theology*, with such as were fram'd according to the *Platonick Scheme*; and we shall find in these latter, that the Article of the *Generation* of the *Word*, and of his *Incarnation*, came in the room of that of the *Conception* of the *Son of God*, which is found in the former

mer Creeds. " The universal Church, " says *Irenæus* (*lib.* 1. *cap.* 2.) hath re- " ceived this Faith from the Holy A- " postles, which is, *to believe in one* " *God the Father*, &c. *and in Jesus Christ* " *his only Son, incarnate for our Salva-* " *tion*, &c. There's nothing in this Confession of the Faith of the Catholick Church, which is not in the very Creed of the Apostles, excepting the word [*Incarnate:*] But 'tis clear that it stands in the very place of those other words, [*conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin* Mary,] which are wanting in this Creed of *Irenæus*. He would say, that the Spirit of God united it self to real, and not to celestial and aerial Flesh, as some Hereticks imagin'd. The turn is somewhat *Platonizing*; but after all, he did not intend to advance any thing but the antient Doctrine, since he disputes against those men, who held that Jesus Christ was pure Spirit clothed with celestial Flesh: and he on the other hand, supposed that Jesus Christ was a real Man, true Flesh animated with a Divine Spirit, a Man born of a Virgin, truly born of the Substance of a Woman, altho form'd by the Power of a Spirit.

Tertullian, in one of his Tracts (*de veland. Virg. in initio*) having given us this plain Rule of Faith, which he calls the immutable and unchangeable Rule, to this purpose, " *That we must believe in* " *one God alone*, &c. *and in his Son Jesus* " *Christ born of the Virgin* Mary, *&c.* in another Tract (*de Præscrip. adv. Hæres.*) presents you with another Rule of the *Platonizing* Faith, which is, " to believe " that the same Word, by which God " created the World, spoke to the Pa- " triarchs, and inspir'd the Prophets, " coming forth from the Spirit, and the " Power of the Father, it lit upon the " Virgin, and was made Flesh, and " wrought in J. C. all sorts of Miracles. Had he forgot that the Apostolick Faith is not to be changed or reformed? No without doubt, he does not pretend to change any thing, but only gives the antient Opinion of the Conception of J. C. in *Platonick Stile*, in *Philosophick Jargon*: or to speak better, he substitutes an Allegory manag'd with force and violence in the room of this Evangelical Expression [*born of a Virgin by the Power of the Holy Ghost,*] which is plain and literal. This Spirit, as *Tertullian* says, being an Emanation from the Spirit, and the Power of the Father, may be said in a mystick and sublime Sense, to be the same Spirit who created the World, and inspir'd the Prophets.

St. *Cyril*, in his *Catecheses*, explains a Creed purely *Arian*, which Dr. *Bull* pretends to be the antient Creed of *Jerusalem*, the Mother of all Churches. *I believe*, it says, *in One God the Father*, &c. *and in One Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of the Father before Ages, true God, by whom all things were made, incarnate and made Man*, &c. I said, this Creed is *Arian*, for 'tis expressed in the same Terms as all the *Arian Confessions* that are now extant. And if the Doctor pretends, that 'tis Orthodox at the best hand, it can pass for no more than the *Creed of Constantinople*, as Monsieur *Le Vassor* has observed, (*Traité de l' Examen, ch. 6. p.* 226.) " This Creed " of St. *Cyril*, says he, is almost the " same with that of *Constantinople*, espe- " cially in the Article concerning the " Holy Spirit. If it be true, that the " *Catecheses* we have, are those which " *Cyril* made in his Youth, as St. *Jerom* " reports it; this Prelate reviewed and " augmented 'em, after the Council of " *Constantinople*, whose Creed he explains " almost word for word. In this case, " it will not be certain, that the Article " concerning the Church was in the " Creed of *Jerusalem*. *Cyril* might " have added it to his *Catecheses* after " the Synod. If this Conjecture holds as to the Article of the Church, much more will it do so as to the *Platonick Word*. We can but say, In this case, it will not be certain, that the Article concerning *a Son begotten before Ages*, was in the

the Creed of Jerusalem. *Cyril* might add to his *Catecheses* after the Synod of [*Const. antinople.*]

Let's join with this Learned Proselyte, the famous Monsr. *du Pin*, who in his second *Tom.* of his *Bibliotheque*, *p.* 413. insinuates "the Novelty of *Cyril's* Creed upon this account: 1. That "it has the Article of *Life Everlasting*, "which is not in all the antient Creeds. "And in his 1 *Tom. Paris Edit. p.* 30. "he says, that *Cyril* in his *Catecheses* "makes a particular Creed, which the "Church of *Jerusalem* us'd at the time "that this Father wrote his *Catecheses*. "That those who have made Commentaries upon the Creed, have omitted "among others these Words [Life everlasting.] And that St. *Jerom* observes in his Letter to *Pammachius*, "that the Creed ended with these "Words [*The Resurrection of the Flesh.*] These Words of *du Pin* are remarkable. He says, *Cyril* made a Creed which was peculiar to him, and that it cannot be ascribed to the Church of *Jerusalem*, till the time when this Father wrote. For 'tis certain, that this is the sense of their Words, in an Author that professes to believe that the Creed is not antient.

But however that be, Dr. *Bull* deceives himself grosly, in supposing this Creed of *Cyril* to be the antient Creed of *Jerusalem*. We can produce another of greater Antiquity, which the same Church ascribes to the Apostle St. *James*. Bishop *Usher* (*de Symbol. p.* 10.) presents us with it. "It must be minded, "says the Primate, that there were "two sorts of Creeds us'd by the *Eastern*; *one contracted*, which *Ruffinus* "compares with that of *Rome* and *Aquileia*; the *other fuller and larger*. Among the first we place the Creed of "*Jerusalem*, the Mother of all Churches, πιστεύω εἰς ἕνα Θεὸν, &c. *I believe in one God the Father Almighty*, "*Creator of Heaven and Earth, and in* "*one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God*, "&c. Thus 'tis read in the antient Liturgy of the Church of *Jerusalem* a- "scribed to St. *James*, who is held to "have been the first Bishop of that "Place: and with this Creed an *Office* "was read once a year, in memory of "its Antiquity. And since the Arti- "cles that follow have (which I mightily regret) been left out, as suppos'd "to be generally known; I thought it "proper to repair this Loss, by substituting in the room of what is wanting, the entire Confession of the A- "postolic Faith, that *Cyril* expounded "to the Illuminated at *Jerusalem*, which "indeed is somewhat larger, as it appears by this addition at the beginning "[*viz.* visible and invisible.]

The short Creed which *Usher* gives us being made by St. *James*, it follows, that of *Cyril* is an Exposition and Commentary: And 'tis impossible on the contrary, that this should be an Abridgment of *Cyril's* Creed; for nothing can be more antient than the draught of an Apostle. Without doubt, the *shorter Creed is the Original*, and the larger none other than a Copy stuffed and lengthened with a *wretched Platonism*, and has not Simplicity enough to pass for an Apostle's; but it may, without wrong, be accounted the Work of a Platonizing Faction. But let that be as it will, there is good ground for believing, that Dr. *Bull* had a mind to deceive us, in dissembling his Knowledg of this antient *Creed* of St. *James*, of which Bishop *Usher* makes mention; and in palming upon us for the most antient *Eastern* Creed, that of S. *Cyril* which is so very different. For altho we have but two Articles of the *Jerusalem Creed*, which is the same with what we call the *Apostles*, yet these two are sufficient to shew, that the *Apostles Creed* is in effect the most antient of all; however Dr. *Bull* (*Jud. Eccles. p.* 128.) pretends it to have been of later Date: And I say further, this may satisfy us, that at this time [of *Cyril*] the Mother of all Churches had strangely alter'd her Faith.

Bishop

Biſhop *Uſher* obſerved what was added to the firſt Article: Who doubts but that like might have been done to others, about which there were far greater diſputes? He might have obſerved the ſame, and the thing is obvious, that the ſecond Article, concerning the Perſon of J. C. being entire, as it appears by the Oriental Creed of *Ruffinus*, which goes no further; it follows then, that all that which is in *Cyril* upon the ſame Article, has been added ſince *Platoniſm* prevailed. *Ruffinus*, ſays Biſhop *Uſher*, has compar'd the ſhorter of theſe two Oriental Creeds with the *Roman*: wherefore this ſhorter Creed was not the ſame with the *Roman*, let the Doctor ſay what he will; nor are we to be much concern'd, as the Primate ſpeaks, for the Loſs of it. *Ruffinus* has preſerv'd it: "Almoſt all the *Eaſtern* Churches, "ſays he (*in Symbol. Apoſt.*) give us "their Creed after this manner, *I be-* "*lieve in one God the Father Almighty*; "and then in the following Article, "whereas we ſay, and in J. C. his only "Son our Lord, they ſay, in one Lord "J. C. his only Son, profeſſing one God "and one Lord, according to the Doc- "trine of St. *Paul*. Note here all the difference the *Eaſterns* made between their Creed, and that we call the Apoſtles: There's nothing in 'em of the Pre-exiſtence of J. C. and his Generation before Ages, as you have it in *Cyril*'s Creed. This ſhews that the Article concerning J. C. goes no farther in this part of the Oriental Creed, which Biſhop *Uſher* gives us; that the [*etc.*] does not retrench any part of it, but is plac'd at the end of the Article, only to ſhew that the remaining Articles are omitted. We may conclude therefore, that all the Jargon of the *Platonic* Philoſophy in *Cyril*'s Creed, took place of the antient ſimple Tradition [which was] *I believe in J. C. the only Son of God, who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin* Mary. And conſequently the antient Opinion of the Filiation and Deification of J. C. ran no higher than his being born of a Virgin by the Power of the Holy Ghoſt; this was the true Theology concerning him.

Ruffinus had reaſon for calling this plain Confeſſion, the Tradition of his Anceſtors, meaning thereby, not the Doctors bigotted with *Plato*'s Enthuſiaſm, but the whole Body of the Church (the People, as *Du Pin* obſerves, *Tom.* 1. *p.* 30.) who doubtleſs never enter'd into the Speculations of thoſe Doctors. Let us ſee what *Marcellus* wrote to Pope *Julius* (*Epiphan. hæreſ.* 72.) where (after he had ſaid what he thought fit concerning the Word, which he denies to be an Hypoſtaſis diſtinct from the Father, ſaying it ſubſiſts in the Father, and that 'tis his very Wiſdom and his inſeparable Power) he confines himſelf to this Confeſſion of Faith, which he ſays, he had received from the Scripture and his Anceſtors: "*I believe in God* "*Almighty, and in J. C. his only Son our* "*Lord, begotten by the Holy Ghoſt of the* "*Virgin* Mary, who was crucified under "*Pontius Pilate*, and was *buried, the third* "*day he was raiſed from the Dead and* "*aſcended into Heaven, and ſat at the* "*right hand of God. Whence* he ſhall "come to judg the Quick and the Dead. "And [I believe] *in the Holy Ghoſt, the* "*Holy Church, the Remiſſion of Sins, the* "*Reſurrection of the Fleſh, the Life e-* "*verlaſting*. See here in expreſs words the Creed we call the Apoſtles, the *antient Theology*, without Platoniſm, without Speculation. There's nothing retrench'd from the antient Confeſſions of Faith, yet Retrenchments were not unuſual amongſt ſome of them. If therefore ſome Creeds are found to be larger in ſome of the Antients, 'tis according to their laudable Practice, by an addition of their novel Interpretations. This is the more evident, becauſe that pretended Interpretations are found to be pure *Platoniſm*, with which 'tis known they were extremely bigotted.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Reflections upon the Apostles Creed, with respect to the foregoing Doctrine.

TO render the Antiquity of the Apostles Creed doubtful, 'tis said, that 'tis notorious, that the greater part of the Articles have been added from time to time, and upon divers occasions. What of that, if those additional Articles are not in the present Contest? Is it not enough, that the three Articles concerning the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost*, as to their Nature and Person (as we speak) I say those three Articles, whereupon we dispute, are very antient? 'Tis true, the antient Formulas of Faith contain'd scarce any thing besides these, which are an Exposition of the Form of Baptism; but then 'tis of these only we are debating. Yea the Liturgy ascribed to St. *James*, and the Oriental Creed of *Ruffinus*, give us these Articles in the proper Words of Scripture, clean of all *Platonism*. Is not such a piece of Antiquity more primitive, and even antecedent to *Cyril* and all the *Platonic Fathers?* But this Creed, says Dr. *Bull*, whatever Simplicity it has, is to be understood in the Extent or Latitude the *Platonizing Fathers* took it in, who made it; always supposing, as you see, that it was not made, till since the Church expounded in her larger Creeds her *Platonic* Faith. I will turn this manner of reasoning upon him, and say, that supposing on the contrary, the antient Liturgy had this Creed in the Simplicity, wherein we have it at this time; it cannot be understood but in the sense of the *Nazarene* Disciples of St. *James*, who most certainly did not *platonize*, as indeed we have prov'd. *Platonism* owes not its Rise to the *Jewish*, but to the *Gentile Converts*, and such Gentiles too as were Followers of *Plato*. True Orthodoxy at the very beginning of Christianity, consisted in believing that J. C. *was begotten of the Holy Ghost*, and consequently was of a celestial Race or Origin: That he had a sort of Pre-existence in this H. Spirit of Power, which was united to him, and that upon these accounts, he was really and in the Letter, the proper, and only Son of God. A Doctrine, which the Disciples of St. *James* maintained against the *Cerinthians* and *Ebionites*; there being no other Controversy than concerning the Generation of the Son of God. For which reason the Creed of *Marcellus* says barely, that the only Son of God *was begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin, and not begotten before Ages*; which might have been said with as much ease as t'other, and must necessarily have been said, if the meaning of the Author of the Creed had been, that [only Son] signifies, *begotten from all Eternity*.

But after all, what will the Doctor say with his Interpretations and his Expositions of the antient Creed? I have observed in divers Passages of his Writings, that he requires too much to be granted him. For instance, he will have it in his *Judic. Eccles. p.* 141. that this Elogy of the Holy Ghost in the Creed of *Constantinople*, *The Living Lord, proceeding from the Father, who is to be worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son*; That this magnificent Elogy was an Interpretation of the Word [Paraclet] in the Creed of *Cyril*. Wonderful Paraphrase, strange Interpretation! that the Paraclet should

should signify all these fine things! *The Living Lord! proceeding from the Father! who is to be worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son.* Well! after this do we think the Doctor does not desire to be believed, when he assures us, that *the Son begotten before Ages, the true God by whom all things were made*, is the true sense of these Words, *the only Son of God?* With the good Leave of this Commentary-Maker, 'tis more natural to believe, in adhering to the Terms of the antient Creed, that begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin, is the true Sense and the right Exposition.

In fine, this pure, simple Creed, was not fram'd by a *Cabal*, a Party; as the Creeds of the Councils of *Nice* and *Constantinople* were, &c. 'Tis not known, if I may so speak, whence it came; 'tis as it were fallen down from Heaven, 'tis the Suffrage of the Universal Church, and 'tis this Suffrage that has saved the Church from Shipwrack, and gain'd her Reverence. *Ruffinus* in his *Expos. Symb.* makes no scruple to say, that this Creed was establish'd to be a Mark of Distinction, by which they might be known, who preach'd J. C. truly, according to *Apostolic Rules*. But 'tis proper I should here transcribe a fine Passage out of Dr. *Hammond* upon this Subject, in his Discourse of fundamental Points, *chap.* 8. Says he, "This Creed is the "very Badge and Livery of the Apo- "stles, the *Abridgment* of that Faith, "which was received from the Apo- "stles: for altho in their Epistles, writ- "ten to such as were already Christi- "ans, one finds no one complete Ca- "talogue of these Articles, which they "taught every where, because they sup- "pos'd them sufficiently known; yet "however the most antient Writers of "the Church assure us, that in all pla- "ces where the Apostles went to plant "the Faith (of Christ) they publish'd "there distinctly, and left there all these "Articles, which serve for a Foundation "to the Christian Life. And 'tis reaso- "nable to believe, that the Apostles "Creed was the summary of these fun- "damental Articles.——'Tis certain, "that before the *Nicene Creed* was made, "all the Churches in the World us'd "this formulary of Faith, which they "received from their Ancestors, and "they from the Apostles themselves, "(*See Irenæus lib.* 1. *c.* 2. & *lib.* 3. *c.* "4.) and there is not the least room "to doubt, but this is the very same "with that we at this day call the Apo- "stles Creed.——*Marcellus* gives us "a Confession of his Faith, which he "says he received from his Predecessors, "which is found to be the same with "our Apostles Creed (*See Epiphan. Hær.* "72.) What I am saying, may be con- "firmed by this Observation of St. "*Austin*, in his Discourse *de Bapt. contr.* "*Donat. cap.* 24. viz. that 'tis reasonable "to believe, that what has generally "been received in the Church, and has "always been held by it, *without being* "*instituted by any Council*, comes to "us from Apostolic Tradition (also.) *Tertullian de veland. Virg.* "The Rule of "Faith, says he, is one and immutable, "*&c.* That this Abridgment of our Creed given us by *Tertullian*, is *one* and *immutable*, can be from no other Cause but from its Apostolic Origin, which alone ought to pretend to that Privilege. For this reason the same Father says elsewhere (*contr. Prax. cap.* 2.) *This Rule came down to us from the very first preaching of the Gospel.*

'Tis true, the Controversy that the Platonizing Christians had at first with the Christians of *Judea*, made the Church, when in power, despise this Creed, which favour'd its Adversaries; so that it but rarely appears in its Simplicity, but is for the most part clog'd and blended with *Platonism*. But in the fourth Century, the Dispute being only between the *Athanasians* and the *Arians*, both good *Platonists*, holding the Pre-existence; this Creed was received, for it oppos'd one no more than t'other;

t'other; and neither of these two Parties had then prevailed over one another. The Church of *Rome* made it always her Creed, for the *Platonic* Controversies were not so warm there as in the *East*. But Dr. *Bull* will return to the Charge, and tell us, as he has done more than once, that *to be begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin*, is no such glorious Privilege for the Messias; that it does not give him any Preheminence above some other Men, who have been miraculously begotten, and by the immediate Power of God: That in a word, it answers not that great Idea, which those Words (the only Son of God) naturally raise in our Minds. I have already answered this Objection, with a Passage of *Bartholomew* of *Edessa*. I could further say, that according to this way of reasoning of the Doctor's, J.C. is no longer by his Hypothesis the only Son of God, if we take those Words, as he does, in their strictest sense, because he has a Brother begotten of God as well as himself, I mean the Holy Ghost. He will clear himself of this, when he can shew me what the difference is between *Generation* and *Procession*, that is to say between *Emanation* and *Emanation*. I mean such a difference, that makes the one a Son, and the other not; this is what we expect from him.

He knows very well, that this knotty difficulty put St. *Austin* hard to it. This Father in his *5th Book, 9. ch. de Trin.* puts this Question: "Whence is it that "the third Person is not the Image of "God as well as the second? Why not "his Word? Why not his begotten "Son? He protests that 'tis hard to "give a reason, why the Father did "not beget one as well as t'other, since "as the *Intellect* begat its *Wisdom* by "knowing it self, it seems likely it "should beget its *Love*, by loving it "self. And at last finding himself too weak to master this difficulty, he betakes himself to his usual Sophistry, and makes you a rare *Medley* of Discourse, wherein he understands not what he says himself. After so great a Master, what may we expect from Dr. *Bull*? or rather who will not be surprized to hear his Objections? *'Tis not enough*, says he, *that God begets a Son of the Substance of a Woman, by his own Power, without the Intervention of a Man: 'Tis not enough that this Generation is without Example. This extraordinary Son, if* he be not the Supreme God, *he is not therefore the Son of God. 'Tis not enough that God has given us an extraordinary Man for the Messias. If he be not the Supreme God, he cannot be the Messias.* Wonderful! What! if God had thought fit to send none other than such a Man, a second *Adam*, not a jot more the Son of God than the first *Adam* was, shall this be no *Messias?* And would this be done upon a Principle of Religion? Should this Messias be thought unworthy of us, because he does not answer the Idea, and the Expectation of the Doctor? *I am astonish'd, when I consider the extravagant Hypothesis of our Trinitarians.* God (in their opinion) will not make good his illustrious Promises, his Word given to *Abraham* and his Seed, and his Oath sworn to *David*, that he would raise him up a Son to reign upon his Throne: God, I say, will do nothing that will answer the Greatness of his Promise, and the Expectation of the *Patriarchs*, if the *Blessed Seed*, if the King so often promis'd and so long expected, if the Messias, who is so glorious, be not the supreme God himself. Nothing is magnificent, according to these Gentlemen, if it be not extravagant. God may *do well* in raising a miraculous Seed to *Abraham* from the Womb of a Virgin: And he may *do well* in raising up to *David* a King and a Prophet, drench'd with the Fulness of his Spirit, and reigning at the Right Hand of his Majesty. All this has nothing great in it, this will not come up to their System of the Messias, nor deserve place in their sublime Theology, if the supreme God himself be not incarnate,

nate, and ſuffers not himſelf to be crucified, to merit by his Sufferings the ſame Glory he voluntarily abandon'd. This is what they call a glorious Goſpel, not that plain ſimple Religion, which preſents you with a Man aſcending into Heaven; but that which without *Machines* or *Hocus Pocus*, brings the ſupreme God down from Heaven. Good God! What vain Imaginations are in the Heart of Man!

CHAP. IX.

The Theology of the Primitive Church went no farther, than the miraculous Conception of the Meſſias, &c.

IT is time to conſider in the third place, that the Theology of the Primitive Church went no farther than the miraculous Conception of the Meſſias: Which appears from this, that the Expreſſion [*mere Man*] which ſhe condemned as heretical, was not oppos'd to an *Eternal Generation*, but to Chriſt's being begotten by the Holy Ghoſt of a Virgin. So that the Platonizing Chriſtians themſelves, who have us'd it in this laſt ſenſe, have been as it were forced to do it thro Cuſtom: What remains of the antient Tradition, obliging them to ſpeak in that manner. Yea, the Force of the antient Tradition has made them to betray themſelves, as we are about to ſhew. The Terms [mere Man ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος] bear at this day in our Minds a different Idea from that which was in the firſt Ages of the Church. With us now, it is ſuppoſed to exclude I know not what ſort of a *Generation of the Subſtance of God*: But with the Antients it was purely oppos'd to the miraculous *Generation of the Subſtance of a Virgin*. We find at this day ſome Footſteps of the antient uſage of theſe Words. The Author of the Apoſtolic Conſtitutions, *lib. 6. c. 26.* giving an account of the Opinion of the *Ebionites*, ſays, *They hold J. C. to have been a* [*mere Man*] *by maintaining that he was not begotten any other way, but by the conjugal Intercourſe of* Joſeph *and* Mary. There cannot be a better account than this, of what the Antients meant by a *mere Man*: A Man begotten by *Joſeph*, and not a Man, who is not the ſupreme God.

Juſtin, or the Author of the Queſtions and Anſwers to the Orthodox, *Quæſt. 66.* expreſſes himſelf thus: "Who "(ſays he, ſpeaking of J. C.) was begot-"ten or conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, "the Son of God, but being born of "the Wife of *Joſeph*, was the Son of "*Joſeph*. *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon* "*thee*, &c. *Wherefore*, &c. *ſhall be cal-*"*led the Son of God*. It muſt be obſerved here: 1. That Son of *Joſeph* and Son of God, are two Terms oppos'd. J. C. is called the Son of *Joſeph*, as he was born of the Wife of *Joſeph*; and the Son of God, as he was begotten by the Holy Ghoſt. 2. That J. C. is called [*Son of God*] on the account of his being begotten by the Holy Ghoſt, in a ſenſe directly oppoſed to [*Son of Man*] that is to ſay, in a ſenſe of excellence, which Dr. *Bull.* is ſo bold as to deny. 3. That the Text of St. *Luke*, which *Juſtin* cites as a Proof, demonſtrates in ſome ſort, that the Antients did not at firſt aſcribe any other Divinity to J. C. but that which was grounded upon his being conceived, and born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghoſt.

In the next place let's attend to *Irenæus*, who takes the Terms [*mere Man*] in the ſame ſenſe as *Juſtin*: "They,

" says he, *lib.* 3. *c.* 23. who call him " (*i. e.* Christ) a mere Man begotten by " *Joseph*, continue in the Bondage of " the antient Disobedience. They then, according to *Irenæus*, held J. C. to be a *mere Man*, who believed *he was begotten by* Joseph, and consequently not begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin: To make good this Charge against those Persons, it was not it seems necessary they should have denied a *Platonic Generation*. But the Passage is so clear it needs no gloss.

I proceed to another Father, and that is *Euseb.* in his 3. *B. c.* 27. where he speaks thus of the *Ebionites*: " They " believe J. C. to be a *mere Man*, an or- " dinary Person begotten by *Joseph* and " *Mary*, but otherwise a just Man, and " extraordinary for his Vertue. You see how *Eusebius*, when *Platonism* did not run in his Head, acquaints us, that they were none other than *Ebionites*, who held J. C. was begotten by *Joseph* and *Mary*; upon which account it may be truly said, that they made him a mere ordinary Man. This scap'd *Eusebius*, without doubt, by his following the Mode of speaking according to antient Tradition, which opposed in the Hereticks of that time, not those Christians who denied an eternal Generation of the Substance of God, for where was that Notion then? but the *Ebionites*, who contested the miraculous Generation of the Substance of a Virgin.

It remains that I examine two Passages of *Epiphanius*: The 1*st* is in his account of the 29th Heresy, which is that of the *Nazarenes*, whom he ranks among the Hereticks; altho *Irenæus*, who must have known them better, has made no mention of this pretended Heresy: " I " do not affirm, says *Epiphanius* of those " *Nazarenes*, whether, following the " Impiety of *Cerinthus*, they received " J. C. to be but a mere Man; or whe- " ther they acknowledged, which is the " Truth, that he was begotten by the " Power of the Holy Ghost on the Vir- " gin *Mary*. The two things oppos'd in this Passage, make it evident to our present *Trinitarians*, that it is not believing J. C. to be a *mere Man*, when with *Socinus* 'tis own'd, that he was begotten by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin *Mary*.

The second Passage of *Epiphanius* is in his 54*th* Heresy, which is that called the *Theodotians*, who he tells you, held J. C. to be a *mere Man*. How so? Why because they believed he was begotten by a Man. This is clear, one Proposition explains t'other; to be a mere Man, and to be begotten by a Man, are Phrases equivalent. And by the Rule of Contraries, *to be begotten by the Holy Ghost, is to be more than a mere Man*, that is, to be the Son of God. The Angel tells us as much, and without doubt these were the Words which were the Foundation of the Theology of the Antients: For, says the Angel, *The Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, and that which shall be born of thee*, not that which was begotten from Eternity, but *that which shall be born of thee*, shall be called the Son of God. The Angel alludes to the Spirit of God, which overshadowed the *Chaos*; as if he would say, that the same Power of God, which drew the World out of that unshapen Mass, would likewise cause the Messias to be born of *Matter* as infertile as the Chaos it self, even of the Womb of a Virgin; and that because of this extraordinary Birth, he should be called the Son of God (*See Maldonate in Loc.*)

The Expressions of the Angel have that force in them, that the Moderns themselves, when they are free from Prejudice, and their Minds are not engaged in the Controversy, have made them their Rule, according to which they express themselves as to the Filiation of J. C. often alledging his Conception of the Holy Ghost, as the formal Reason that made him the Son of God, in opposition to *Son of Man*. Thus Bishop *Usher* us'd them, in explaining a Passage of *Ignatius* (*Dissertat. in Ignat. cap.* 12.) where he says,

ſays, "The Devil knew not whether "the Mother of our Saviour, who was "married to a Man, was a Virgin at the "Birth of the Child, nor whether the "new-born Infant ought to be called "the Son of God, or the Son of *Jo-* "*ſeph.* This Learned Perſon explaining an Apoſtolic Doctrine, ſpeaks in an Apoſtolic Manner: He oppoſes [*Son of* Joſeph] to [*Son of God*] but to what Son of God? To a Son begotten from all Eternity? 'Tis plain enough of what Son he is ſpeaking, 'tis to a Son of God who was begotten by the Holy Ghoſt, who was not the Son of any Man, altho he was born of a Woman; and who had none but God for his Father. So *Grotius* upon *Mark* 1. 1. having given the reaſon why St. *Mark* ſpoke nothing of the miraculous Birth of J. C. he adds: "That 'twas not neceſſary to ſpeak of it "till there were ſuch, who held that "J. C. was no more than a *mere Man.* From which Words of this *great Critic* it follows, that to hold J. C. to be a mere Man, is not to deny him to be the ſupreme God, but to deny that he was born of a Virgin.

Dr. *Bull* in his *Judicium Eccleſ. p.* 43. objects againſt this antient Faith, that no Writer has ſpoken of it, as of a Tradition different from the *Platonic* Faith, which is pretended to have prevailed afterwards. That on the contrary, *Euſebius* gives this Teſtimony of the Biſhops of *Jeruſalem*, that they had a right Knowledg of J. C. and that their Doctrine was ſound on this Article. But that which I am now going to ſay concerning this antient Faith, and that which ſhall be ſaid hereafter, makes it evident enough, that 'tis to little purpoſe for the Doctor to boaſt, that Antiquity is altogether ſilent in this matter. As for his Proof from *Euſebius*, 'tis too uncertain and general to be us'd as an Argument in our Queſtion. *Euſebius* ſays in general, that the Antients were ſound in their Opinion, or had a right Knowledg of J. C. Who doubts it? Since in believing him to be born of a Virgin by the Operation of the Holy Ghoſt, and not by her Converſation with *Joſeph*, they profeſſed the ſound Doctrine of that time; and they rejected the Error oppos'd to it, which made J. C. but a *mere Man.* But *Euſebius*, 'twill be ſaid, could not ſpeak ſo, but with regard to his own Opinion, which was that of the Pre-exiſtence. But I ſhall reply, whence had *Euſebius* his Information, that the Doctrine of the Antients was ſound? Was it not from *Hegeſippus?* or, as he himſelf ſays, from Monuments of the Antients, which is the ſame thing. But if this antient Author (*Hegeſippus*) did not believe the *Platonic* Pre-exiſtence, as *Euſebius* did; will it not follow, that the Doctrine of theſe Biſhops was ſound, not with reſpect to the ſenſe of *Euſebius*, but with regard to the antient Author, who gives them that Teſtimony? Every one frames for himſelf an Idea of ſound Doctrine, according to his particular Judgment of things. Suppoſing therefore, that this antient Author believed, as the Orthodox Doctrine of his time was, that J. C. was not the Son of *Joſeph* and *Mary*; and (ſuppoſing) on the other ſide, there was none other Theology of his Birth than this, that he was the Son of God by the Virgin *Mary*; *Hegeſippus* might very well ſay, the *Nazarene* Biſhops were found in their Doctrine of the Perſon of J. C. without any ground for concluding thence, that they held the *Platonic Faith*, and were of *Euſebius* his Judgment. 'Tis enough that they were not engaged in the Error of the *Ebionites*, becauſe they were Orthodox. To explain this by an example, let's ſuppoſe that *Euſebius* had ſaid of ſome *Arian* Biſhop, that his Faith was ſound as to the Perſon of J. C. could the Doctor and his Friends thence conclude, that this Biſhop believed the Conſubſtantiality and Equality of the Father and the Son? By no means. All they could hence infer, is, that the Biſhop believed the *Platonic* Pre-exiſtence, which

was

was the true Faith according to *Eusebius*, who believed neither the *Consubstantiality* nor the *Equality*, &c. We ought to reason in the same manner from the Words of *Hegesippus*, who held that for a sound Faith, which *Eusebius* would have called impious, if he had known it, as the Doctor would that which *Eusebius* thought sound. Who does not know, that those very Persons, who held the Orthodox Faith of the first Ages, I mean that of the miraculous Birth of our Saviour, were accounted impious in the time of *Eusebius*? Because they would not receive the Notion of the *Platonic Word*, and the modish Philosophy of an Eternal Generation, that was rashly superinduced or brought in the room of a plain Doctrine, of a Generation in time of *Mary* by the Holy Ghost, that is of a Woman, by (the Power of) God. But from the beginning it was not so, they had another Theology, for the better Demonstration of which, I shall shew in the following Chapter that,

CHAP. X.

The Word, and the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost) according to the sense of the Antients, were but one and the same thing.

I Shall lastly consider that the [Word] among the Antients, and the [Holy Ghost] in the Evangelists, are but one and the same thing; and that the Platonizing Writers themselves, led by an antient Tradition, the Footsteps whereof remain'd a long time, have confounded these two Terms, having often used 'em in one and the same Signification: An evident Proof that the Philosophy of the *Platonic Word* owes its Birth to *Allegories* made upon that *Divine Power*, which overshadowed the Blessed Virgin; which Power may be indifferently call'd the Holy Ghost, or the Word. But as the latter Term is more agreeable to the Doctrine of *Plato*, so 'tis more frequently used. So that at last, this Conformity of Terms brought the *Platonic* Fathers to a conformity in Doctrine with *Plato*; that is to say, they fell into two Errors directly opposite to the Doctrine of the Gospel. One, in that they have made of a Power, or a mere Operation, an *Hypostasis*; the other, in that they have made two Hypostases, of the Word and the Holy Ghost, which at the bottom are but two diverse Operations. Where therefore they made two Hypostases of these two Operations, they follow'd their own Philosophy; but when they confounded these [Operations] they built, without question, upon this Passage of *David*, which says, *The Heavens were made by the Word of the Lord, and by the Breath of his Mouth*; where the Word and Breath of the Lord are put together as things inseparable, which differ not in effect, only in this, that the *Breath* is the Substance of the *Word*, and the Word is the Operation of the Spirit, to use the Words of *Tertullian*, *adv. Prax.*

I shall pass over *Hermas*, who in his *5th* & *9th Similitudes*, says, *That the Holy Ghost is the Son of God.* I have already shewn that he speaks thus but in parable; for which reason his Testimony would be of no use but to serve for an Illusion. And I shall say nothing more of *Ignatius*, who salutes the Church at *Smyrna*, in the Inscription of his Epistle, with these Words, *The Holy Spirit which is the Word of God*; as if he had said, by or thro him, who is the Holy Ghost, or the Word of God. This

Passage

Paſſage is not very exact or clear, ſo as to perceive the meaning of the Author, and to be able to draw from it a convincing Proof. Let us begin therefore with *Juſtin Martyr*. He in his 2*d Apol. P.* 74, &c. having ſtil'd Jeſus Chriſt the "firſt and principal Power, the *Son* and "the *Word*, who had not his Birth from "Man, but by the Power of God; he comes afterwards to examine the Paſſage in St. *Luke*, *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the Power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee*, &c. "By the Holy Ghoſt (or "Spirit) ſays he, and the Power which "came from God, we ought to under-"ſtand nothing but the *Word*, which "is the firſt-born of God. And for the better underſtanding what Word he is ſpeaking of, he adds all in one Breath, "That 'tis the Spirit which inſpir'd the "Prophets, and which ſpake in the Per-"ſon of a Prophet, or in the Perſon of "the Father, or in the Perſon of Chriſt, "or in the Perſon of the People. Here's no difficulty; either he has ſaid nothing, or he has formally ſaid, that the Holy Ghoſt which inſpir'd the Prophets, and the *Power of the moſt High* of which St. *Luke* ſpeaks, and the *Word* in St. *John*, are all but one and the ſame thing.

After a Teſtimony ſo expreſs; I have no need to heap up other Paſſages out of the Writings of this Father, wherein we may in part diſcover the ſame truth: As when, in his Dialogue with *Trypho*, *P.* 327. he makes an Oppoſition between the *Word of the Serpent* by which *Eve* conceived, and the *Word of God* by which the Bleſſed Virgin did conceive. Theſe are rather flights of Fancy, and ſtarts of Wit in a Preacher, than an Expoſition of the Chriſtian Faith. Only I would have it obſerv'd, how in his 5*th* Book, *P.* 284. he collects all the Qualities, and all the Names which were uſually given to the Word, and to the Spirit, that he may apply 'em to Jeſus Chriſt. "Firſt, ſays he, God began, "before all the Creatures, certain ra-"tional Power, which is ſometimes "called the Spirit, the Glory of the "Lord, ſometimes the Son, ſometimes "the Wiſdom, ſometimes an Angel, "ſometimes God, ſometimes the Lord and "the Word: For all theſe Names are "given to him, either becauſe he is the "Miniſter of the Deſigns (or Purpoſes) "of the Father, or becauſe he was be-"gotten by his Will. All this has much of the air of a theological Allegory, by which one would expreſs that *Spirit*, and that *Power* of God, which he imploy'd to execute his Counſels, and which comes not from his *Underſtanding* by a neceſſary Emanation, but by his Will by a free Operation: That *Power*, I ſay, which may be called his Word, or his Spirit, according to the different reſpects wherein one conſiders it.

I will produce another Proof of this important Truth from *Theophilus Antiochenus*, in his 2*d* Book to *Autolycus*. "Who (ſays he, ſpeaking of the Word) "being the Spirit of God, the Begin-"ning, the Wiſdom, the Power of the "Higheſt, came down into the Pro-"phets, by whom he ſpake. What could he ſay more formal to make us underſtand that he took for one and the ſame thing, the Spirit of God, his Word, his Wiſdom, and his Power? His meaning cannot be miſtaken, when one conſiders, that the Spirit, and the Word, whereof he ſpeaks, is the ſame that inſpir'd the Prophets: Words that very well agree with thoſe of *Juſtin*, which I now come to examine. Theſe two Fathers underſtood by the *Word*, nothing but that prophetick Spirit, the fulneſs whereof dwelt bodily in Jeſus Chriſt, and that St. *Paul* calls *the fulneſs of the Godhead*. This is, in effect, the Explication, that the Author of the Homilies aſcrib'd to *Origen*, has given (*in Diverſos Homil.* 2.) "St. *Paul*, ſays he, calls "the fulneſs of the Godhead, thoſe "myſtick Senſes (or the truth of thoſe "legal ſhadows) which dwelt *bodily* in "Jeſus Chriſt; that is to ſay, *truly* and "*really*;

" *really*; because that he is the Foun-
" tain and Fulness of Grace, the truth
" of the antient Symbols, and the ac-
" complishment of Prophetick Visions.
But, according to the Fathers, Jesus Christ was fill'd with this Prophetick Spirit, not only when the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form of a Dove, and that God made him a Prophet; but especially when he was conceived by the Power of the Highest: and he was, as I may say, begotten a Prophet, that is to say, when by virtue of his Generation his Body was formed for the Office of a Prophet. And 'tis chiefly this last Consideration that is urg'd against the *Josephites*, because this Privilege of his Birth makes us to regard him, not only as a Man who was a Prophet, but as a Prophet who was also the Son of God. But to return to the Passage from *Theophilus*, if it be read throout, one shall find a fine Allegory upon the *Word*, and the *Holy Spirit*, which he calls the Wisdom of God. Sometimes he considers 'em as two Divine Emanations proceeding from the Bowels of God, and which God us'd as his two Hands, or two Ministers, by whom he created the World: And sometimes he makes 'em but one Operation, and so both are the Spirit and the Word, the Wisdom and the Power of God, *&c.* Why so? If not because that this Spirit takes divers Names, either for the diversity of its *Prolation*, or for its different Operations: For the *Word* is the Spirit (or Breath) prolated with a Sound and a Voice, and the Spirit is a Word brought forth tacitely and in silence; the one *with*, the other *without* sound: One acts *inwardly* in a hidden and secret manner, and the other *outwardly* and openly. 'Tis thus the Fathers speak. In my opinion, 'tis idle to look for any exactness in these sort of allegorical Discourses, which are loose, and where the Fancy taking its swing, drives on in full Career.

Irenæus, one of those Fathers who was obliged to urge the miraculous Conception of our Saviour against the *Ebionites*, confounded the *Holy Ghost* with the *Word*. " These Hereticks would not
" own, says *Irenæus*, *lib.* 5. *cap.* 1. *the*
" *Union of God with Man.* Why? Because, says he, they believed the Lord Jesus to be a mere Man. How a mere Man? Because they believed him to be the Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, like other Men, and not of a *Virgin* by the *Operation of the Holy Ghost*. What says the Holy Father to this? He laments that they would not consider, how in the first Creation, " the Breath of God uniting
" it self to the Body of *Adam*, animated
" the Man, and made him a reasonable
" Creature: So in the New Creation,
" the Word of the Father, and the
" Spirit of God, being united to the
" old Substance of *Adam*, hath form'd
" a living and perfect Man, who contains
" in himself the perfect Father.

Dr. *Bull*, in his *Judic. Eccles.* p. 10. having cited this Passage, takes no notice of these words [*who contains in himself the perfect Father*] it may be because *Irenæus* seems to say, that 'twas the Father who was incarnate; or, as 'tis more probable, because these Words expressly demonstrate, that by the Word, *Irenæus* understood nothing but the very Power of God. The living Man, of whom he speaks, containing in himself the perfect Father, only because he was filled with God's Spirit and God's Word, which were united to the Man. But whatever he himself thought, this is a truth that one perceives at first in reading the Text of *Irenæus*. 'Tis at least, most evident, that he confounds *the Spirit of God* with *the Word of the Father*, as one and the same Power which formed the *New Adam*; and that he opposes it to the Divine Breath, and Spirit of God, which animated the first *Adam*: His only aim being to oppose the *Ebionites*, who denied that the Spirit of God interven'd in the Conception of Jesus Christ. His only concern is also to establish firmly this miraculous Conception, and to make 'em

'em regard Jeſus Chriſt as the moſt perfect Man, whom the Father, who is perfect, had miraculouſly begotten by his *Word* and by his *Spirit*, in the ſame manner, as by the means of his Almighty Word he animated the firſt Man with the Breath of Life. To make *Irenæus* his Conception of the Word the ſame with the Moderns, is to ſee and not perceive. In ſhort, by reading his Text alone, one ſhall be convinced, that in his ſtating the Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt he goes no further than his miraculous Conception by the Holy Ghoſt. He not only confounds the Word with the Spirit, but calls the *Word* the Deſcent of the Holy Spirit into the Womb of *Mary*: He calls it, I ſay, the Union and Mixture of God with Man. He ſays, the Father wrought at the Incarnation of his Son, or at the new Generation, with the ſame Hands (excuſe his Phraſe) as he did at the Generation of the *Old Adam*. If we ask him what he means by *Hands* in this place, he tells you in his *4th* Book, 37 Chap. that he underſtands thereby, the Word of God, his Son, his Wiſdom, and his Spirit: He means, that *powerful Command* which God us'd in the Creation of things, which is called his Spirit, foraſmuch as it is in God, and is in a manner his Soul; and which is alſo call'd his Word and his Son, in regard that it came from his Mouth to form the Creation, it was in a manner *begotten*: That is to ſay, by the ſame manner of ſpeaking, that the Wiſdom and the Power of God are called his *Hands*, by the ſame they are called his Son, his Word, and his Spirit. And further, to make it clearer that this Father always confounds the Holy Ghoſt with the Word, I muſt obſerve, that in the laſt Paſſage I am about to cite, he applies to the Holy Ghoſt the ſame Words of *Solomon*, which are ordinarily applied to the Son. "The "Word, ſays he, who is the Son, was "always with the Father; and becauſe "the *Wiſdom*, which is the Holy Ghoſt, "was alſo with God before the Creation, "it ſpeaks thus by *Solomon*, *God hath* "*founded the Earth by his Wiſdom*, &c. "and again, *The Lord created me*, &c. There is therefore but One God, who hath made all things by his Wiſdom, and by his Word.

CHAP. XI.

A Continuation of the ſame Proofs, that the Antients underſtood by the Word *and the* Holy Ghoſt, *one and the ſame thing.*

BUT after all, you will ſay, *Irenæus* makes an expreſs diſtinction between the Word and the Spirit. I anſwer, Yes. But *David* makes the ſame diſtinction too, and from him I believe the Fathers borrowed theirs: *The Heavens*, ſays he, *were formed by the Word of the Lord, and by the Breath of his Mouth.* By the way, who will be ſo weak as to affirm, that he did not mean by theſe two words the ſame Power of God, as if the Word was not the Breath of his Mouth, and the Breath of his Mouth the Word? Can one forbear ſmiling, when one ſees our Divines put *David* in the number of the Trinitarians? In fine, *Irenæus* extols the Generation of the Son of God by the Operation of the Holy Ghoſt, as infinitely more excellent than the Generation of the firſt Man, which was by breathing Life into him, or by the Divine Breath. *Irenæus* affirms it, but Dr. *Bull* denies it, maintaining that Jeſus Chriſt was not the Son of God by virtue of his miraculous Conception, in a manner more excellent than *Adam* was by virtue of his immediate Generation (or Formation) by

God's own hand. Let us suppose it as the Doctor would have it; yet after all he must agree that this Holy Father carries the Parallel that he makes between the first and second *Adam*, no further than their Generation, which was equally extraordinary in both. This appears in the 31st Chapter of his 3d Book. "If the first *Adam*, says he, had his "Being from a Man, it might be said "with some shew of reason, that 'tis "the same as to the second *Adam*, and "that *Joseph* was his Father. But if it "be true on the contrary, that the *first* "was form'd out of the Earth by the "*Word* of God; must not the same "Word acting with the same Power as "he did at the Formation of *Adam*, "carry a resemblance of the same "Generation? Let this Comparison be a little minded; it contains this clearly, that God did no more in the Generation of the second *Adam*, in whom he would dwell, than in that of the first *Adam*; that *Adam* and Jesus Christ are the immediate Production of this Word: Consequently there's no more reason to infer the hypostatick Union of the Word with Jesus Christ, than with *Adam*; this Word being, as you see, nothing but the Power of God, which having immediately formed the first Man, did also form Jesus Christ after the same primitive manner of Generation: All the difference is, that God was pleas'd to dwell in the latter after an extraordinary manner.

Let's see in the next place what *Tertullian* has to say. He was a great *Platonist*, but that Party does not always strictly observe the Rules of *Platonism*: They have their lucid Intervals, wherein some Remains of the antient Tradition drop from their Pens. Whenever they philosophize according to the humour of that Faction, they are to be suspected, 'tis the effect of their Prejudices: but when they happen to speak to the disadvantage of their own Hypotheses, what is it that could oblige them to it, but the Power of Truth alone? *Tertullian* therefore, at the end of his Discourse against *Praxeas*, sifting this matter of the Nature of the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*, to the bottom, speaks of 'em as one and the same *Power*. 'Tis worth while to read the whole throughout, but I shall content my self with this following Passage, which is decisive, and beyond dispute. (*Contra Prax. cap.* 26.) "*The* "*Spirit of God* (i. e. *Holy Ghost*) *shall* "*come upon thee*, &c. By saying the "*Spirit of God*, altho the Spirit of God "be God, nevertheless he not calling it "directly God, he would have us under- "stand a Part of the Whole, which was "to attend the Person of the Son, and "get him the Name that he has. This is "that Spirit of God, which we call the "*Word* also: For as when St. *John* says, "*the Word was made Flesh*, by the term "[*Word*] we understand the Spirit; so, "in this Passage we understand the *Word* "under the Name of the *Spirit*; since "the *Spirit* is the Substance of the *Word*, "and the *Word* the Operation of the "*Spirit*, and these two are but one: "For if the *Spirit* be not the *Word*, and "the *Word* be not the *Spirit*, 'twill fol- "low, that he of whom St. *John* says, "that *he was made Flesh*, will not be the "same with him of whom the Angel "says, that *he shall be made Flesh*.

Let us weigh well all these Words: By the Spirit *Tertullian* understands nothing but *a Portion of the whole*, a Beam of the Substance of God, as he expresses himself elsewhere; because otherwise it would follow, according to *Praxeas*, that the Father himself was incarnate. He will have it, that this *Portion* makes the Son what he is, that is, the Son of God: He confounds the Spirit with the Word, and will have St. *Luke* and St. *John* speak the same Language; and that the first might have said, *the Word shall come upon thee*, and the latter, *the Holy Ghost was made Flesh*; since that by the term [*Holy Ghost*] the *Word* must be understood, and by the term [*Word*] the

the Holy Ghoſt; and that 'tis not likely St. *John* would ſpeak of one particular Spirit, and the Angel of another. And more than this, he acquaints us what uſe we ought to make of theſe two Words, which at the bottom ſignify but the ſame thing; and that is, we ought to call this *Power*, *Spirit*, when we would expreſs its *Subſtance*; and *Word*, when we would expreſs its *Operation*. In ſhort, he decides our Queſtion by ſaying, that theſe *two* are but one and the ſame thing, that is to ſay, the ſame *Power*. " For the " Word (ſays he, in his *Rule of Faith*, " *de Præſcript.*) deſcended from the " Spirit, and the Power of God, into " the Womb of the Virgin. What does this import, *viz.* the Word deſcended from the Spirit and the Power of God, if not this, that the Word is nothing elſe but an Emanation, a Manifeſtation of the *Power*, which is internal and eſſential to God? And 'tis almoſt in the ſame ſenſe that *Marius Victorin.* (*contra Arium lib.* 1.) ſtates a *twofold Power* of the *Word*, that is to ſay, a twofold Operation; *the one manifeſt, which is Jeſus Chriſt*, in the Fleſh; the other ſecret (or hidden) which is the Holy Spirit: the one by way of *Manifeſtation*, the other by way of *Communication*. But after all, 'tis but a twofold Operation of one and the *ſame Power*. I forbear to take notice of divers other Teſtimonies of *Tertullian* of the like kind; as for inſtance, at the beginning of his Book concerning *Prayer*, in his Diſpute againſt *Marcion*, *lib.* 3. *cap.* 6, & 16. and in his Diſcourſe of the Fleſh of Jeſus Chriſt, *cap.* 19. the Reader may conſult 'em, if he pleaſes.

To the forementioned Authorities from *Tertullian*, I will ſubjoin that of *Novatian* (*de Trinitate cap.* 19.) " That which " chiefly conſtituted the Son of God, " ſays he, was the Incarnation of the " *Word* of God, which was formed by " means of that Spirit, of whom the " Angel ſaid, *the Holy Ghoſt ſhall come* " *upon thee*, &c. For this is the true " Son of God, who is of God, who " uniting himſelf to the Son of Man, " makes him, by that Union, the Son " of God, which he was not before: " So that the main reaſon of this Title, " *the Son of God*, ariſes from that *Spirit* " of the Lord which deſcended.

How, the *Word* of God incarnate by means of that Spirit which deſcended on *Mary*! Is the ſecond Perſon incarnate by means of the third? Very good Divinity! Is it not rather this Divine Operation, that bears the Name of the *Word*, which manifeſted it ſelf in the Fleſh of Jeſus Chriſt, by means of the Holy Spirit, which inſinuated it ſelf into that Fleſh? That is to ſay, that which is called the *Spirit* on account of its Subſtance, is at the ſame time called the *Word* on account of its Manifeſtation, and its Operation. For this reaſon *Novatian* places not the chief ground of the *Filiation* of Jeſus Chriſt, in *a Word*, which was a different Hypoſtaſis from the Spirit; but in *the Word*, which is the *Operation* of that *Spirit*, of whom the Scripture ſpeaks, ſaying, *the Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee*, &c. And it would not be underſtood what the Fathers mean, when they confound the *Word* with the *Spirit* that over-ſhadowed the Virgin, or when they diſtinguiſh theſe two Powers; if it be not laid down for a Rule, that by the *Spirit* they underſtand the very Nature of the Spirit, the Principle (or Source) whence Prophecy comes; and by the *Word*, a certain and particular *Operation* of that *Spirit*; as for inſtance, the miraculous Conception of our Saviour.

I have yet an antient Doctor to alledg, and he not of the meaneſt Rank; I mean St. *Cyprian*, who does not make any diſtinction between the *Word*, the *Spirit*, the *Son of God*, the *Wiſdom*, &c. This Father having cited the ſecond Pſalm (*de Mont. Sina & Zion, adv. Jud. cap.* 2.) where he ſpeaks of the King whom God had anointed on Mount *Sion*; " 'Tis upon this Mountain (ſays he),

" that the *Holy Spirit*, *the Son of God*, " was eſtabliſh'd King, to proclaim the " Will and the Empire of *God* his *Fa-* " ther: and in the fourth Chapter of " the ſame Diſcourſe, the Fleſh of *A-* " *dam*, ſays he, which J. C. bore *in a* " *Figure*. (that Term has a Tang of " *Marcion*'s Hereſy) this Fleſh was call'd " by his Father *the Holy Spirit*, which " came down from Heaven, the Chriſt, " the anointed of the Living God, a " Spirit united to Fleſh. The ſame Fa- ther elſewhere (*in his Diſcourſe de Idolor. vanit. cap.* 6.) expreſſes himſelf thus: " The Word and the Son of God is " ſent, whom the Prophets had fore- " ſpoken of as the Inſtructor of Man- " kind. He is the Power of God, his " Reaſon, his Wiſdom, and his Glory; " the Holy Spirit hath put on Fleſh, " God is mingled or united with Man.

The Holy Spirit is the Son of God, and at the ſame time the Word is the Son of God; and which is more, the Fleſh of J. C. is called the Holy Spirit which came down from Heaven; which could not be true but of its Celeſtial Origin, and as it was formed by the Holy Spirit. So that *Cyprian* ſeems to intimate thereby, that 'tis becauſe of this Celeſtial Origin, that the Scriptures ſay, the Fleſh of J. C. came down from Heaven, that the Son of Man came down from Heaven; for it may be very well ſaid, that J. C. came down from Heaven, ſince his Origin was from Heaven in his Birth by the Holy Ghoſt. And what is the [Holy Spirit] but the *Word*, according to this Father? The Word is the Holy Spirit, which united it ſelf to Man, the Word is the Holy Spirit which put on Fleſh: In ſhort, 'tis the Holy Spirit which is the Chriſt of God. You'll ſay what hinders, but the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity may have alſo the Name of the third? That's pure Fancy! Why ſhould one ſhut ones eyes, when one ſees as clear as the day, that St. *Cyprian* alludes to the miraculous Conception of our Saviour, and that theſe ſublime Expreſſions of that Father have no other Foundation but that Myſtery?

As for what *Lactantius* affords us, I hope his Authority will not be conteſted with me in the deciſion of a Point, wherein he does no more than confirm a Tradition, elſewhere well ſupported and followed. This pious Perſon having ſaid in his Inſtitutions, *lib.* 4. *c. 6. That God begat a Holy Spirit*, which he call'd his Son, he reſumes this Diſcourſe in the 12*th chap.* of the ſame Book, thus: " This Spirit of God, ſays he, coming " down from Heaven, made choice of " a pure and holy Virgin, into whoſe " Womb he inſinuated himſelf; and this " Virgin conceived, being full of the " Holy Spirit which embrac'd her.

That which *Lactantius* expreſſes by theſe Words, *deſcended on a Virgin*, can it be any other than that which St. *Luke* expreſſes in theſe, *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee?* But the Holy Ghoſt, of whom the Angel ſpeaks, is the ſame, according to *Lactantius*, with that Holy Ghoſt which God begat, and which he called his Son. Dr. *Bull* tells us, the Fathers underſtood by the Holy Ghoſt, the Divine Nature of J. C. Very well! but why ſo? If not for this Cauſe, that J. C. had no other Divinity than that Spirit of Power and Holineſs, which form'd his Body in the Womb of a Virgin. For in ſhort, the Fathers ſpeak after this manner, when they explain theſe words, *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee*, &c. or allude to them, and always with regard to his Birth of a Virgin. But the Holy Spirit in *this Paſſage*, *Luke* 1. 35. ſignifies moſt certainly that Power, which we *Trinitarians* call the third Perſon. And if the Fathers had a mind to find the ſecond there, as is ſaid, there's no knowing what the Words ſignify; for it muſt be affirmed, that they have ſtrangely miſtaken the Scriptures, and in ſo unaccountable manner, as I may ſay, that there is no longer any certainty to be met with in their Writings.—All's in Confuſion as in the antient Chaos.

There's

There's nothing whereby to discover the Names of the Divine Persons, nor by consequence the Persons themselves. Be it as it will, the Doctor will find it hard enough to apply his Solution to all the Arguments I am about to mention. And if he can do it, 'twill be no more difficult for him to find the Divinity of J. C. in all the Passages of the Gospel, where mention is made of the Holy Ghost. I hope also that at last he'l say, that when J. C. promis'd his Holy Spirit to his Apostles, he promis'd them his Divine Nature.

But I must beg my Reader's Patience a little longer, to see what Answer the Doctor will make against the last Authority I am going to alledg. And that's a Letter of the Council of *Sardis*, in the second Book of *Theodoret*'s *Hist. Eccles.* The Fathers there drew a Creed in three very distinct Articles, the first concerning the Father, the second the Son, and third Article the Holy Ghost. In the last, which is so expresly distinguished from that of the Son, they speak thus of the Incarnation by the Holy Ghost: "We believe also there is a Holy Spirit "or Paraclet, which the Lord promis'd "and sent. He did not suffer; but the "Man whom he assumed or took from "the Virgin *Mary*, he suffer'd, because "he was capable of it; whereas God "is immortal, τοῦτο δὲ πέπονθεν, &c. *Is,* "*passus non est.* Where one sees the Pronoun τοῦτο agrees with Πνεῦμα, which is a Neuter. Now of this Spirit the Fathers say he cannot suffer; but 'twas Man, whom he put on and took from the Virgin, that did suffer. This they speak, I say, of the Paraclet, whom they confess after the Father and the Son, and not of the Divine Nature of J. C. A Passage expres and formal, which clearly proves these Doctors understood nothing else by the Holy Ghost, but that Power of God, whereof the *Word* is the *Manifestation* and the *Operation*, confounding the Spirit with the Word, and very distinctly assuring us, that *the Paraclet was incarnate.* Is the Paraclet the Divine Nature of J. C. or the second Person of the Trinity? Here we'l wait the Doctor's Answer. *Valesius* not bearing with this Incongruity in the Council, had the Boldness to corrupt this Passage in his Version, by foisting in the word [Christ] for thus he has translated it: "He did not suffer, but the Man whom "*Christ* put on. The Word [Christ] is not in the Text, which intirely relates to the Holy Ghost or Paraclet: In short, that Word ruines the whole sense of the Period, and strangely confounds all this third Article, which belongs only to the Holy Ghost, and is distinct from that concerning J. C. Both Translators and Copists are guilty of Falsification in this particular.

Give me leave to affirm one thing, and that is, that the Antients have often distinguished *the Holy Spirit* from *the Power of the Highest*, whereof he is speaking in the same Text, calling the latter the *Word of God*, the *Son of God*, and saying only of the former, that he overshadowed the Virgin. Now even this shews, that by the Word, they understood nothing but the Power and the Operation of the Holy Spirit, which is the same thing with the Power and Operation of the Highest. The *Holy Spirit* signifying the *Substance*, and the *Power* of the Highest signifying the *Operation*; it follows, that the *Word*, which is the Power of the Highest, according to the Fathers, is not otherwise distinguished from the [Holy Spirit] than as the *Operation* is distinguished from its Subject.

We may conclude therefore from Proofs so very evident, that the Antients who have deified J. C. had no other ground for their Theology, *but the Birth of J. C. of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost*; that by the *Word* and the *Son of God*, they always understood *this miraculous Operation*; and that they never advanced any higher, (*in their Discourses*) towards that, which is called *an eternal Generation.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

An Account of the Foundation of the Allegorical Theology of the Fathers, concerning the Word *and* the Holy Spirit.

I Dare assure my Reader, that I can shew him the very Foundation of this Allegorical Theology. 'Tis known that the Fathers imitated the *Gnosticks* in many things, and particularly in the way of *Allegory* and *Contemplation*. But 'twas *Mark* the *Valentinian*, as we are inform'd by *Irenæus*, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 12. who was the Author of the Allegorical Exposition on the *Birth of J. C.* that is, the first who elevated it to a sense of Contemplation and Mystery. He makes a *Quaternity* of the *Man* and the *Church*, which are the first Pair; and of the *Word* and *Life*, which are the second Pair. But what sort of Theology does he couch under this Enigma or Allegory? Why nothing less than the wonderful Conception of J. C. " *The Man*, says " he, is *the Power of the Highest*, be- " cause that acted instead of the Man. " The *Church* is the *Holy Virgin*, because " she held the place of the Church. The " *Angel Gabriel* was instead of the *Word*, " and the *Holy Spirit* instead of *Life*. Nothing can better convince us of the *Allegory* us'd by the *Valentinians*, than this Passage, in which the *Angel* is the *Word*, and the *Spirit* is the *Life*; the *Power of the Highest* is instead of the *Man*, and the Virgin is instead of the Church. I might also have produc'd this Passage for a Proof, when I was arguing this Point; but I have reserv'd it on purpose for this place, to shew that the whole Mystery of the *Word* reduces it self to the miraculous Conception of our *Saviour*, upon which both the Hereticks and the Orthodox have equally allegorized, each taking his Flight as his Contemplation led him on: And this is that famous Theology so much extolled by the Fathers.

I know most of them, being entangled with their *Platonism*, have mightily embroiled the first and antient Ideas of this matter. But I know also, that before they came to make *two Hypostases* of the *Word* and the Holy Spirit, they were terribly perplexed about the latter, and could not tell what to do. Hence it was, without doubt, that they so long delayed the deifying [of the Holy Ghost] The Council of *Nice* has not at all touched upon its Divinity. So far were they from it, and the Holy Ghost made so small a Figure at that time, *that some Fathers of the Council made no difficulty to give its place to the Blessed Virgin, by making her the third Person in the Trinity.* Of which we are informed by *Elmacinus* and *Patricides*, in *Hotting. Orient. Hist. lib.* 2. *p.* 227. The Council of *Constantinople* durst not speak openly upon the point: And in S. *Basil*'s time, there was a little Shiness in calling the Holy Ghost directly and formally *God*. 'Tis worth our regard what *Petavius*, *de Trinit. lib.* 2. *c.* 7. §. 2. says hereupon: " The " Catholic Church, says he, accommo- " dating it self, for prudential Reasons, " to human Frailty, came not to the " *full* Profession of *some* Points, but " by little and little, and by degrees. " For it did not define nor pronounce " any thing in express Terms a- " bout the *Deity* of the Holy Ghost, " during the four first Ages very near. " 'Tis certain *Gregory Naz. Orat.* 20. & " *Ep.* 26. excuses the Conduct of St. " *Basil*, who, tho he was right in his " Opinion of the Deity of the Holy " Ghost,

" Ghoſt, would not however for Peace-
" ſake, call it *God* openly and expreſly,
" becauſe he knew there were many,
" otherwiſe good Catholicks, who would
" be offended if that Name ſhould be
" given to the Holy Ghoſt, that being
" not ordinarily and publickly done a-
" mong the Catholicks till after the ſe-
" cond General Council, held in 381.
Which is as much as to ſay, that at laſt, Time and Cuſtom had placed the Holy Ghoſt in the Number of the Gods.

Good God! almoſt four intire Centuries of the Church, which were the brighteſt and the pureſt, did determine nothing about the Deity of the Holy Ghoſt: juſt before the end of the 4th, they durſt not ſpeak of it but ſhily, for fear of offending the very Orthodox themſelves. Where was then the Trinity? Was the Tradition then loſt? What, that of the Orthodox and the Catholicks, who rejected or at leaſt were offended at an Article ſo fundamental! What greater Crime could Hereticks have been guilty of? Whence came it that the third Perſon was admitted ſo very late? Prudence, they tell us, would have the Notion conceal'd for a time. But why was not that of the ſecond Perſon concealed too? Are there not the ſame prudential Reaſons for that too? I think I perceive the difference of the caſe. The third was not known to the *Platonizing Fathers* themſelves, but in a very confuſed manner, and was not by the greateſt part of them held for any other than a Creature. The *Second* was in high eſteem with all the *Platonic* Party, deifyed by the whole Sect, the Favourite Notion, and principal Machine of the Syſtem. 'Twas eaſy to introduce this among the Gods of their Chriſtian Religion, which at that time was modell'd according to *Plato*'s Notions. But for the third, which was not ſo much in favour, 'twas difficult to admit it into that *Rank*, without great Addreſs and Precaution. In the mean time, their over-cautiouſneſs has prov'd a Diſadvantage to both; the third interferes with the ſecond, who ſhould have been *produced* at the ſame time with his Brother, or both eternally concealed: For if the third cannot defend it ſelf, what will become of the ſecond, which is his elder Brother? He is not of better Blood, nor of a nobler Stock.

Can we doubt, after ſuch convincing Proofs of the antient Tradition, but by *the Virgin Church* (whereof *Hegeſippus* ſpeaks, in *Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l.* 3. *c.* 32.) this *antient Nazarene* meant the Church of the Circumciſion, which had not yet imbibed *Platoniſm*; as by *the Seducement of Error*, and *Science falſly ſo called*, that had its Birth under *Adrian*'s Reign, he meant the *Platonizing Doctrine of the Gnoſtics*, which was then brought into the Church? 'Twas Philoſophy that intirely ruin'd the true Religion, as the Apoſtles had foretold. In ſhort, *Valeſius* obſerves upon the Paſſage I ſhall by and by cite out of *Euſebius*, that this Hiſtorian too much extends the words of *Hegeſippus*, aſcribing thro Miſtake to the Univerſal Church, what *Hegeſippus* ſpoke only of the Church of *Jeruſalem* or *Judea*. But *Hegeſippus* his being ſo particular is remarkable. He would have us *obſerve* by it, that fatal Epocha, when the *Nazarene Chriſtian Biſhops* were ſucceeded by the *Gentiles*, and by that means *Platoniſm* came in the room of that pure and unmixt Truth, which St. *James* his Succeſſors had preached, which happened exactly in the Reign of *Adrian*, that is, when the *Jews* were driven out of *Judea*, and the Chriſtians of the Circumciſion with them. *Sulpitius Severus* in his *Hiſt. l.* 2. *c.* 45. had reaſon to ſay; the Chriſtian Faith (which according to him is the *Platonizing Doctrine*) drew great advantages from this Diſperſion. He would have ſaid, that the *Nazarenes* then ceaſing the Obſervation of the legal Ceremonies, made no further ſcruple to unite with the *Gentile* Church. But this is not all, the greateſt advantage that accrued to the

the *Gentile* Church, was, that *Platonism* meeting no longer with any Opposition from the Primitive Faith, which the *Nazarenes* had inviolably preserv'd, it spread far and wide, and like an Inundation overspread the whole Church, not excepting that of *Jerusalem*, that antient Repository of the Apostolick Tradition, which then lost its Simplicity and Virginity, as *Hegesippus* expresses it. 'Twas at this time the Gentiles in the Person of Pope *Victor*, rose up against the Christians of the Circumcision, and oppress'd 'em, by taking from 'em an Apostolick Tradition touching the Day when the Passover was to be celebrated. And if they could wrest from 'em this Tradition in a point of mere Practice, it was more easy to strip 'em of a Tradition in a point of Doctrine, concerning the Nature and Person of Jesus Christ, the former being much more easily retained than the latter. There must have been a great noise and hurly-burly to alter the former; whereas for the latter, 'twas enough if they took the method of explaining and illustrating, or pretended an accommodation to a Sense more noble and profound. 'Tis of this Innovation, attended with Tyranny, that the *Artemonites* complain, as *Euseb.* tells us, *Hist. Eccles. lib.* 5. *c.* 28. Their Complaint was, that their Doctrine, which was the same Truth that the Antients and Apostles had taught, and which had been preserved intire till the time of Pope *Victor*, was corrupted under *Zephirin* his Successor. The *Anonymous*, who relates this, endeavours to confute 'em, by alledging Authors who liv'd before *Victor*, and had ascrib'd Divinity to Jesus Christ, or had called him God: But I have demonstrated that this Theology of the Antients is grounded only upon the *Birth of our Saviour of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost*; and does by no means go so far as the *Platonick Notion* of his Generation. The first of these the *Artemonites* did not disown, for they believ'd Jesus Christ to be the Son of God by *Mary*. If the *Anonymous* would prove from the Antients against the *Artemonites*, that Jesus Christ was God's Son begotten before all Ages, how comes it to pass, that he finds no antienter a Patron of his *Platonizing* Opinion, than *Justin Martyr*, who wrote after the fatal *Epocha*, when the Succession of the *Nazarene* Bishops ended, and after the rise of the first *Gnosticism*, *Basilides* and *Valentinus*, &c. that is, after the Church had lost its Virgin Purity, and the *Gnostick* Opinions had corrupted the antient Theology?

The Authorities of his date are to be suspected. Why does he not ascend as high as *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Clemens Romanus*, and *Polycarp*? Would he have wanted the Honour of having these *Apostolick Men* for his *Vouchers*, if he had thought 'em opposite to *Artemon*? He does not go so far back as *Ignatius*; which makes it to be suspected, either that he did not believe *Ignatius* favour'd the Opinion of Christ's Pre-existence, or that the Epistles of that Father were a Forgery after his time. 'Tis to the first and earliest Antiquity we must ascend: *Artemon* will be in the right, if he rejects those latter Testimonies, and produces more antient ones for his own Doctrine. But the *Anonymous* cites Scripture, and so does *Artemon* appeal to it, alledging that his Doctrine is the same Truth that the Apostles had taught: That therefore is the thing in question. We shall see hereafter who has the most reason to appeal to this most Primitive Authority; for I intend to examine in what sense the Son of God is there deity'd.

The *Anonymous* makes another small attack upon the *Artemonites*, for their seeming to insinuate, that *Victor* was not against their Doctrine, but that *Zephirin* was the first that did persecute it. I will not repeat here what I have remark'd touching the deposing of *Theodotus*, that *Victor* might excommunicate *him* as an *Ebionite*, without breaking Communion with the *Artemonites*, who maintained the Orthodox Doctrine of the miraculous Con-

Conception of our Saviour. 'Tis sufficient at present to shew, that the Words of *Artemon* may fairly signify, that *Victor* was the first who attack'd the Apostolick Faith, but that *Zephirin* intirely destroy'd it. So far is *Artemon* from ranking *Victor* among those who preserv'd the Truth intire, that he seems to say on the contrary, that he began, and *Zephirin* completed its Ruin. *Victor* began, by excommunicating one single Christian, *Theodotus*; and certainly *Zephirin* concluded by excommunicating the whole Orthodox Church, or all the other Great Men who joined with *Artemon* in the defence of *expiring Truth*; as the *Fable* concerning their Bp *Natalis*, that comes after, inclines one to think. I call it a *Fable*, for nothing is more extravagant, than to talk of Angels whipping and scourging the *Artemonite* Bishop into the bosom of the Church. How! were the Angels the first who made Converts by *Dragooning?* Is there any thing that can more discredit this Romance of the *Anonymous?* Another Story, that *Eusebius* has tack'd to this, is, when he makes the *Anonymous* say, that *Theodotus* was the first Author of the *Error* ascrib'd to him, which is false, take his Heresy in what sense you please.

Dr. *Bull* endeavours to cover the Reputation of *Eusebius* by a certain wretched distinction; but he does not observe that *Eusebius* contradicts him, for he goes on to say in the same Book, that *Theodotus* was the first whom *Victor* excommunicated; which supposes that he was the first who suffer'd for his adherence to this Doctrine, but not the first who published it. If he was the first Martyr for it, it does not follow that he was the first Author of it. 'Tis highly probable, that the great noise of the Excommunication of *Theodotus*, upon the very account that this Persecution was new and unheard of, made him pass in after-times for the very Author of that Opinion for which he was persecuted. Not to insist on it at present, that *Eusebius* makes no scruple a little to corrupt the Story at all times, when he can by that Fraud give the Air of Antiquity to his *Platonick Logos*, or of Novelty to the opposite Doctrine, which he hated with all his heart; he has been catcht in so many other Places, that the Presumptions against him cannot but be very violent. For instance, where he makes *Josephus* say, that on the Day of Christ's Passion, a Voice was heard in the Temple of *Jerusalem*, saying, *Let us go hence.* And witness another Passage, where he makes the same *Josephus* say (*Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib.* 2. *c.* 9.) that 'twas an Angel who appear'd over the Head of *Herod Agrippa*; whereas *Josephus* expresly says, it was an *Owl.* One plainly discerns where the pious Fraud lies; he would not have it be thought that the *Jewish* Historian did not agree with St. *Luke.*

Thus it appears, in spite of all the Efforts of *Eusebius*, that 'twas in the time of *Victor* and *Zephirin* that the pure Faith of the first Christians fell with the Church of the *Nazarens*, which from that time have often pass'd for *Hereticks.* The new Succession of *Gentile* Bishops (*Euseb. lib.* 4. *c.* 5.) began with one *Mark*, and *Platonism* enter'd into the Church with the new Bishops. *Saturninus*, *Basilides*, and the whole Class of the *Gnosticks*, made a mighty progress afterwards, under colour of discovering Secrets unknown heretofore to the Church. About the same time *Carpocrates* his Heresy was broach'd, another *Mysteryman.* To speak the truth, the infamous Practices of these Pretenders to Illumination were not long born withal in the Church: Human Nature alone, without the Succours of Religion, knew how to quit it self of it in a short time. But as for their Philosophy, the Church managed that to her purpose: after some sifting and refining, 'twas adjusted to the more specious part of her Religion, for the support of her new Opinions; which being pure Speculations, the Affections were not so far concern'd about 'em, as

to take notice of their *Repugnancy*: And the Mind, which is naturally desirous of Knowledg, found its account in 'em; and the natural Veneration Men have for Mystery, and for every thing they do not comprehend, had the greatest Stroke in this matter, and gained the Point. So one sees how by insensible Methods and Degrees, the *Gospel*, which is a *Doctrine purely practical*, was exchanged for *Contemplation*, *Mystery* and *Fanaticism*.

CHAP. XIII.

An Account of the first Christians, call'd Nazarens.

TO conclude, it may not be amiss to give my Readers an Idea of the first Christians, called *Nazarens*. There were two sorts of 'em, as many of the Fathers, and some of the Moderns have observ'd: The former improperly so called, and more properly *Ebionites*; for they believ'd Jesus Christ to have been the Son of *Joseph*, and obliged the *Gentiles* to keep the Law of *Moses*. Among these, such who held *Jesus* to be *the Christ*, were tolerated, and accounted *Christians*; but the others had not that Character, because they made *Moses*'s Law necessary to Salvation, and held Jesus for no more than a just Man, or a Prophet, who suffer'd in the Cause of Righteousness and Truth: They would not have the Benefits of his Mission to extend to the Gentiles; or in a word, that he was the *promis'd Messiah*, and had any Power in Heaven. Some believed he was not truly rais'd from the Dead; others believed he was, that he might receive the Reward of a Good Man, but not that he might be made Lord of the World: They could not be persuaded to think that Jesus, who was come in the Flesh, that is, in so low and mean a Condition, could be *the glorious Messiah*, *the Christ* so often promis'd by the Prophets.

The other sort of *Nazarens*, properly so called, were the Believers of *Judea*, to whom that Name was given, as the Name [*Christian*] was to the Gentile Proselytes. These believ'd Jesus Christ to be born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost, and in this Sense they called him the *Son of God*: and not only so, but they confess'd this Son of God to be *the Christ*. For 'tis thus the Words of St. *Austin* must be understood (*de Hæres. c.* 9.) and not as Dr. *Bull* expounds 'em (*Judic. Eccles. p.* 47.) by a *Hysteron Proteron*, in this manner, that *the Christ was the Son of God*, that is, according to him, a Son begotten before all Ages. *Danæus*, a better Critick than he, made no blunder in his Exposition of St. *Austin*'s Words: *The* Nazarens, says he, *believ'd that Jesus the Son of* Mary, *was the Christ*; and 'tis certain the Words ought to be taken in this Sense. (*Dei filium confitentur Nazaræi esse Christum*, says the Father.) In short, they did not oblige the Gentiles to observe the Law, which they thought themselves ought to keep, as being *Jews* by birth; but they afterward abandon'd it too, as an Obligation that ceas'd as soon as they were driven out of *Judea* by the Emperor *Adrian*.

There is a great confusion among Ecclesiastical Writers, in their Judgment of these *Nazarens*. Some look upon 'em as Hereticks, with others they pass for *Orthodox*. The latter Fathers, as *Epiphanius*, St. *Austin*, and *Theodoret*, place 'em in their Lists of Hereticks; but the more antient Fathers, as *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, have not set 'em down in that Catalogue. 'Tis easy to conjecture whence

whence this Disagreement comes. Sometimes they pass'd for *Orthodox*, 1*st*. Because their Opinion that Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost, *&c.* being originally the Orthodox Faith, some Remains of that Tradition maintain'd their Honour for a time. 2*ly*. Because *Eusebius*, after *Hegesippus*, had given 'em this Testimony, *that their Faith was sound*, as we have before shewn. Now this Historian, who gave his Opinion of 'em according to his own Prejudices, mistaking their true Sentiments, has drawn other *Platonizing* Christians after him into the same Mistake. 3*ly*. The *Nazarens* believ'd that by virtue of the miraculous Conception of our Saviour, God was truly his Father; and for this reason they give him the Title of the Son of God, and it may be, of *God* too sometimes. The *Platonizing* Christians suffered themselves to be amused with big Words, having their Minds pre-ingaged in Ideas they had put upon 'em beforehand; so that they were so far from treating the *Nazarens* as *Hereticks*, that they have often made 'em speak in the *Platonick* manner, always supposing thro prejudice, that whoever said these Words [*Son of God*] meant by 'em, a Son begotten before all Ages. But sometimes also they reckoned 'em *Hereticks*, either because they confounded 'em with the *Ebionites*, or because their Opinion, rightly understood, was look'd upon as Heretical, after *Platonism* prevail'd. When all those, in short, who went for the Divinity of Christ no farther than *his Generation from God and the Virgin Mary*, and who refus'd to subscribe or assent to *the Platonick Generation before all Ages*; all such, I say, were no better treated than the *Ebionites*, who believed *Christ to be the Son of* Joseph; they were all anathematiz'd without hopes of absolution. 'Tis from this confusion of Ideas, that we meet with so much obscurity in the History of the *Nazarens*.

Dr. *Bull*, who knew not how to clear up this Perplexity, runs himself into greater Difficulties: He teazes and fatigues himself to maintain his own Sentiments under the Expressions of the *Nazarens*, and to reconcile the irreconcilable Censures of the *Platonizing* Fathers about 'em. But what signifies all this ado? The truth is, nothing of his *Platonism* was in the least known to the *Nazarens*. All his Citations are grounded upon the equivocal Sense of these Words [*the Son of God.*] True it is, they went beyond the *Ebionites*, and believ'd Jesus Christ was more than a mere Man, because they believ'd him *to be born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost*: Yet the *Nazarens* must be Hereticks, say the Doctor what he will, if they are to be try'd by his *Platonick Faith*: But they are also Orthodox, say others what they please, if they are examin'd by the Rule of Orthodoxy that prevail'd in the first Age of the Church, the Footsteps whereof have been preserv'd by some Writers in succeeding Ages, as I have already proved.

F I N I S.